LIBRARY
STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE
JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE

The New REPUBLIC

January 6, 1941

SAMUEL GRAFTON
on The Appeasement Tropism

Mr. Roosevelt Says Go . . . . . *Editorial*

High Cost of Ships . *M. M. Fagen and Benj. Post*

They're in the Army Now . *Dorothy D. Bromley*

The Race Against Hitler . . . . . *Editorial*

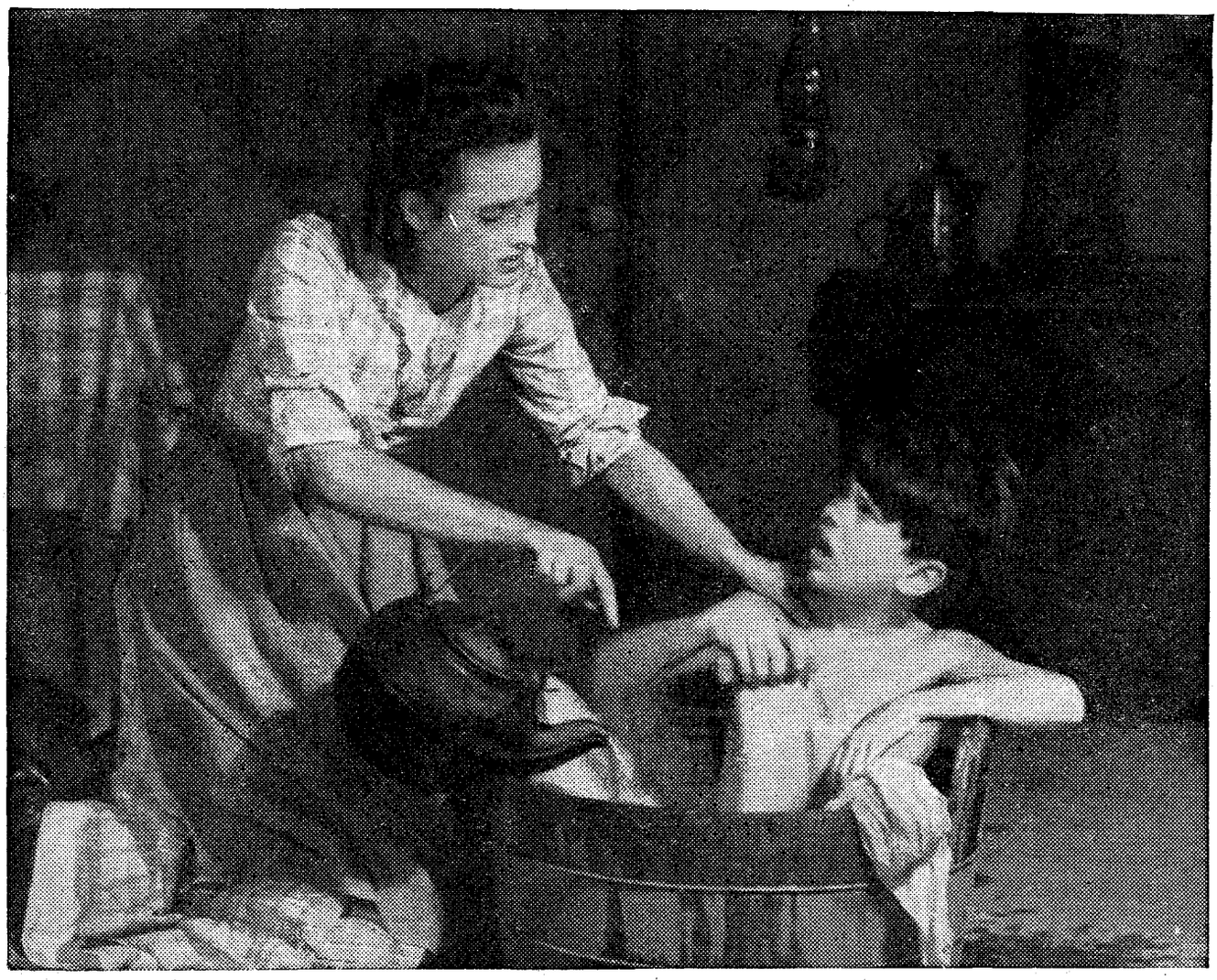
Stefan Wolpe's Music . . . . . *Paul Rosenfeld*

Dr. Millis: Scientist of Labor . *Jonathan Mitchell*

FIFTEEN CENTS

LIBRARY
STATE [illegible] COLLEGE
[illegible]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"Hurry Up Now! Pa's Waiting!"

THE kitchen stove used to feel pretty good on a winter's Saturday night when the thermometer was down around zero. So did the heated flatiron in the foot of the bed. But how many of us would trade the comfort and privacy of our modern, heated bathrooms for the cramped discomfort of the wooden tub and the sting of the home-made soap? And who wants to lug out the water afterward and mop up the kitchen floor?

There are a lot more of today's home conveniences that we wouldn't trade for their counterparts of the "good old days." The electric washer, for instance, for the scrubbing board; the electric light for the messy coal-oil lamp; the furnace for the parlor base-burner.

Most of us are incomparably richer than the people of a generation ago—not so much in money, perhaps, but in the things our money will buy. And in most cases these are the products of American industry—manufactured articles that have been developed by industry, improved, made less and less expensive so that more millions of people can afford to own them.

In almost every manufacturing improvement that has made this progress possible, electricity has played a vital part. And the scientists, engineers, and workmen of General Electric, who have done so much to make electricity more useful, are still seeking ways for electricity to help in the creation of More Goods for More People at Less Cost.

G-E research and engineering have saved the public from ten to one hundred dollars for every dollar they have earned for General Electric

GENERAL ELECTRIC

952-116G2

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

30941

VOL. 104, NO. 1 NEW YORK, MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 1941 NUMBER 1362

Up Democracy, Down with Unions?

High officials of the United States War Department are not generally partial to labor unions. (We believe this gives no military secret away.) These officials may, however, prove to be more responsible for bringing about labor unity than they would have thought possible in their wildest dreams, or nightmares. Their willful action in awarding a $1,387,500 contract for "midget" scout cars to Henry Ford, distinguished violator of the labor laws, has brought a flood of protests to Washington, not alone from the CIO auto workers, but also from many AFL locals and the railroad brotherhoods. This is labor unity in action, more important than labor unity in words. It reflects the enormity of the offense. There may have been some justification for allowing Ford to make airplane engines, in view of the need, but the scout cars can be made by almost any automobile manufacturer, and are being made by several. The army seems to have taken a tight-lipped military pleasure in overriding Defense Commissioner Sidney Hillman's protest. This is a democracy, and the army will now take the consequences: we hope in the form of a drive to establish complete civilian overseership of procurement. A defense program for democracy must prove itself not only in the total of goods produced but also in the way of life enjoyed by the producers. Is the army's position to be Up Democracy, Down with Labor Unions? The people will not take kindly to this convulsive strategy, as the protests show. The common man has no talent for facing two ways.

Can Mr. White Outguess Hitler?

As we make it out, Mr. William Allen White is completely in favor of a British victory and completely opposed to amending the Neutrality Act or the Johnson Act. We do not understand why he has donned handcuffs the better to fight a crusade. What will happen when the British need for funds collides with our statutes? Will the irresistible force or the immovable object give way first in Mr. White's mind? Man cannot live by a neutrality act alone; it is democracy that must be saved, not any particular law on the books; has not Mr. White put a gadget of the moment above the substance of the world's struggle? It is rather naïve to hear that certain actions, such as loans, may lead to "involvement" in war, while others, such as sales, will not, when it is Hitler who makes these decisions. He may decide in a certain case that an opponent's speech, or an insult to a German shoemaker, is a sufficient *casus belli;* he may, contrariwise, be willing to overlook long years of hostility, as in the case of Russia. It is to rid the world of this horrid guessing-game that democracy is in arms; Mr. White, who often seems to sense the importance of this ultimate issue, seems currently to be playing that game himself.

How Not to Make a Revolution

Prime Minister Churchill's speech to the Italians was an able statement of the British case against Mussolini. That is unfortunate. A statement of the Italian case against Mussolini would have been far more effec-

CONTENTS

The Week 3
Editorials
Mr. Roosevelt Says Go 6
Why We Need Britain 6
New Tax Powers for the States 7
General Articles
The Race Against Hitler 9
The High Cost of Ships . . . . . Melvin M. Fagen and Benjamin Post 10
Quid Factum Est, Quod Tu Proiectis, Iuppiter, Armis (verse) . . . John Peale Bishop 12
They're in the Army Now . . . . . Dorothy Dunbar Bromley 13
Obituary Notice . . . . . Mill Lampell 15
Dr. Millis: Scientist of Labor . Jonathan Mitchell 16
Heat (verse) . . . . . George Abbe 17
The Appeasement Tropism . Samuel Grafton 18
Washington Notes . . . . . T. R. B. 19
Resurrection without Life . . Otis Ferguson 20
Stefan Wolpe's Music . . . Paul Rosenfeld 21
The Bandwagon 22
Correspondence 23
Books in Review
Procrustes and the Poets . . . Allen Tate 25
The Eye at the Keyhole . . Stanley Walker 26
Verse, Ecstatic and Knotted . Robert Fitzgerald 27
Dean in Cloud-Cuckoo-Land . Freda Utley 28
Italian-American Novelists . . . . . Jerre Mangione and Muriel Burns 29

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1940, IN THE U.S.A. BY EDITORIAL PUBLICATIONS, INC., 40 EAST 49TH ST., NEW YORK, N. Y.
ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER, NOVEMBER 6, 1914, AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y., UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879
PRINTED IN THE U. S. A.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tive in producing the hoped-for result: an Italian revolution. The Italians will not rise against Il Duce because of British grievances, only because of their own. The speech was, therefore, a major miss. It acknowledged that Mussolini is a "great" man; it told of British respect for him; it revealed that Mr. Churchill had addressed words of good will to him as recently as May. Then what happened? Mussolini declared war on England regardless. How could Mr. Churchill have hoped that this recital would stir any Italian, harassed by the high taxes, the long hours, the cruelty and brutality of fascism, to revolution? The speech said, in effect, that England had not objected to Mussolini's fascism, only to his declaration of war. That may make sense to some Englishmen, but it is twaddle for Italians. Time and again Mr. Churchill said the trouble in Italy was "one man." Some of us have believed that it was a system. An intelligent Italian might conclude that another fascist, *i.e.*, another man, would be acceptable to England. Italy will not rise to put another fascist in the Palazzo Venezia. England is in need of creative political thinking about Italy to match her brilliant military victories. The establishment of a fully recognized "Free Italy" committee, on a world scale, composed of anti-fascist Italian exiles, would have been more effective than this still-born speech.

Mr. Smith Does His Stuff

Representative Smith set out to "get" the National Labor Relations Board and the law back of it, and the final report of his committee offers evidence of this fact, but of little else. It was signed only by a bare majority; the minority apparently was ignored. It is full of prejudiced accusations against Board members and employees; it prickles with misinterpretations and makes recommendations that could only hamper the government's attempt to enforce collective bargaining with bona-fide unions. But of course that is exactly what Mr. Smith and those behind him want. That he is not really much concerned about matters of procedure, efficiency and fair administration is proved by the fact that his broadside came out just the same, although the majority power in the Board has come into the hands of two of the ablest, most experienced and best trusted labor adjusters in the country—Messrs. Leiserson and Millis.

Scientists and Ape Men

The conference of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, held in Philadelphia between Christmas and New Year's, was in large part like previous scientific meetings. About 2,000 papers were read before scores of special groups on such technical subjects as "Effect of Interrenalectomy upon Electrolytes in the Skates" and "Effect of Ultracentrifuging of Protoplasmic Flow," but there were also manifestations of profoundly disturbed attitudes about the way the world is going. Many of the men present are engaged in national-defense activities and some of them have suspended their normal research for this purpose.

Dr. Leonard Carmichael of Tufts College reported on a great census that is now being taken of the scientific abilities of thousands of person all over the country, primarily for national-defense purposes. Dr. K. A. C. Elliott of the Pennsylvania Hospital painted a black picture of what has happened to science in Europe and appealed to the members of the Association not to let the light go entirely out. Dr. Walter Cannon of the Harvard Medical School drew a savage portrait of our society under the guise of comparing the superior efficiency of the human body to the frailties of the social organism. One speaker after another indicated a belief that control of much of the world's area has got into the hands of "ape men" and expressed the conviction that science must help to restore control to civilized human beings. If the picture they painted was a dark one, there was at least some hope in the fact that they are so acutely aware of the problem.

What Excess-Profits Tax?

Corporate profits in 1940 may be from $1,500,000,000 to $2,000,000,000 higher than they were in 1939. But the excess-profits-tax bill was so badly drawn that very little of this money will go to the United States Treasury.

Corporations may meet the excess-profits tax by paying one-half of their 1940 profits in excess of their average 1936-39 profits. But—and this is the joker—they may alternatively meet the tax by paying one-half of their profits in excess of an eight-percent return on their invested capital. For tax purposes, invested capital means the sum of capital, plus surplus, *plus one-half of all the money that the company owes.* Many corporations are so heavily capitalized (not to say overcapitalized) and have such a large debt that they can double or triple 1936-39 earnings without paying a penny of excess-profits tax.

Consider Tom Girdler's Republic Steel Corporation. This company should make about $17,000,000 in 1940. It averaged only a little more than $7,000,000 a year for the 1936-39 period. Its excess-profits tax ought to be half the difference between these figures, or about $5,000,000. But by basing the tax on capital investment, Republic will pay *no* excess-profits tax. Its capital, plus surplus, plus one-half its debt, add up to $300,000,000. As eight percent of this amount is $24,000,000, Republic will have to make more than $24,000,000 before any excess-profits tax can be collected.

Bethlehem Steel averaged just under $19,000,000 profit per year from 1936 through 1939. This year it should make about $48,000,000 and pay an excess-profits tax of $14,500,000. But Bethlehem has a big

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

capital and surplus and a $181,000,000 funded debt. It can base its tax payments on an invested capital of $572,000,000. Bethlehem will earn a little more than eight percent on even this amount, but the "excess" will not come to much more than $2,000,000, leaving Bethlehem with about a $1,000,000 excess-profits tax to pay. The invested-capital option will save Bethlehem about $13,500,000 and cost the United States Treasury the same amount.

Congress should immediately amend the excess-profits-tax bill so as to eliminate the invested-capital option. Otherwise, many of the war's greatest corporate beneficiaries will pay little or no excess-profits tax.

Jeeves Meets His Waterloo

News of P. G. Wodehouse, Germany's most famous prisoner-of-war, has arrived at last. An AP correspondent found Mr. Wodehouse in a German concentration camp, in good health and spirits, "wearing a long, heavy tan bathrobe held together with a leather belt." He was quietly at work in what was formerly the paddled cell of a lunatic asylum in Silesia, where his new novel—tentatively entitled "Money for Jam"—is taking shape.

Grave injustice has been done Mr. Wodehouse, incidentally, in accounts in the American press of the way he was captured at his home in Le Touquet, France. These reports showed him as a singularly ill informed person who did not know the Germans were anywhere in the vicinity until they walked in upon a cocktail party that he was giving. Le Touquet residents tell a very different story. They say that Wodehouse did a grand job looking after the RAF squadron stationed there before the German break-through; that he and the rest of the British colony were well aware of the German danger in May. The warning to the colony to clear out was held up; by the time they realized their danger it was too late. One RAF fighting plane remained and the pilot offered Wodehouse the single extra seat in the plane. He declined—preferring to remain with the elderly ladies and other bewildered foreign residents who had no way of escaping. The "cocktail party" at which he was caught by the Germans was actually his feeding and sheltering of these worried people.

The Nazis in Denmark

In The New Republic of December 23 Mr. Francis Hackett reported on the persistent spirit of freedom among the Danes. The American-Scandinavian Foundation, of New York City, has just issued a leaflet which completes Mr. Hackett's article by describing the conditions under which the Danes must struggle.

German looting has included every sort of industrial and raw materials, fuel, grain, fodder and fertilizer. Seven hundred locomotives and thousands of coaches and freight cars are reported "borrowed" to transport these materials to Germany. Lack of coal will almost certainly cause numerous deaths this winter despite the Danes' attempt to develop a substitute sufficiency of peat. Lack of imported food has given the Germans a good excuse for shifting 25,000 head of cattle from Denmark to the richer pastures of newly annexed Lorraine. Taxes and prices are skyrocketing. Rationing of commodities increases steadily. Unemployment is up 50 percent. Danes trying to find work are told by the Nazis there is plenty available for them in Germany. If they accept the offer they are allowed to send 125 marks of their earnings to their families in Denmark. This is sent by means of a draft on the Danish National Bank which charges the sum to Germany's "account." Forced labor in Germany costs the Danes more than if they were to pay these laborers the regular relief rate.

Yet with all this the Danes realize they are still in the initial stage of conquest—that the real test of their spirit will come when Germany's easy pickings have been exhausted and the screw must be tightened to squeeze out of them the few essentials of life that remain.

News Notes of a Week

Heavy bombings of London and the invasion ports marked the end of what appeared to be a tacit Christmas truce between England and the Nazis. . . . Reports from Hungary and Rumania numbered German troops in those countries at between 350,000 and 500,000. . . . The Greeks continued to advance slowly in the central Albanian sector, delayed by stiffening Italian resistance. . . . The final attack on the Italians at Bardia by the British was thought to be imminent. . . . German raiders in the Pacific were believed responsible for the disappearance of fifteen British merchantmen. . . . A Standard Oil tanker of Panamanian registry, manned by a crew of more than forty Americans, was sunk off West Africa with the loss of several lives. . . . Possible evidence of a still stronger stand against the Nazis was seen in the report that Pétain has sent French naval officers to "vacation" in French Africa, along with several French naval units. . . . Voluntary contributions from the United States for aid to the Greek civil population have arrived in Greece. They total $750,000.

Alien registration in the United States came to a close with the total number expected to approach the five-million mark. . . . The Sherman anti-trust law was brought against the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) and two radio chains on grounds that they sought control over copyrights. . . . Governor Lehman of New York urged conversion of plants making "non-essential" goods into plants for defense production. . . . Christmas in the United States was reported the most spendfree and gayest since the slump.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. Roosevelt Says Go

ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S radio fireside last Sunday night were gathered a majority of the American people, many of the British, and millions of other listeners through the world. We hope that among the latter were Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini and the military rulers of Japan. For Mr. Roosevelt made it precisely clear, even if he had not done so before, that their policy of public bluster and secret betrayal will get them exactly nowhere with this country. Threats only urge us on the course we know is the safe one—to give the utmost possible aid to Britain and construct our own defenses on the largest possible scale.

We are prepared not only against the tactics of the fifth column, but against the still greater danger from patriotic Americans who do not understand this country's peril. Mr. Roosevelt did not mention any names, but it would be no test of intelligence to fill in the blanks. We hope these gentry also were listening in. To them it was made clear that appeasement is useless and that there can be no negotiated peace with the dictators unless they surrender the fruits of their aggression. This was not a mere expression of will, but a statement of hard fact, for such a "peace" would mean a war economy for years, if not resumption of hostilities at a time chosen by the enemy.

For the defeatists in this country, and for those who still cherish a spark of hope in the non-belligerent and the conquered nations, was the President's assurance that after careful survey of the available data he believed firmly that the Allies would be victorious. That word was for Pétain and Weygand and hordes of anonymous Frenchmen, for the rulers of Russia and Bulgaria and Turkey, even for the Japanese and the waverers in Latin America. It was for the Poles, the Swedes, the Norwegians, the Danes, the Belgians and the Netherlanders. It was for the inhabitants of their possessions in the East and elsewhere. And it was for the Chinese, who had a special message of encouragement.

The Italians were reminded of their own suspicion that to be rescued by Hitler is to become subject to him. We hope they heard. And Mr. Roosevelt tactfully suggested to the Irish that they could hardly expect to retain their freedom in a Nazi world.

It may be doubted whether any statesman ever said so many important things to so many people in so brief a time. Few of these things were new; they had greater force because they echoed what was at the bottom of most hearts. What was news was that the President of the United States thought it important to repeat them forcefully at precisely this time.

To Americans especially Mr. Roosevelt did bring a message that they had not heard before from the Chief Executive. The most important decisions in Washington had been waiting for his lead in these matters. Because of the urgency, war industries must expand their plants, without reference to their fear of excess capacity after the crisis. We shall find a way then to use our total capacity in supplying ourselves with the means of life. Defense requirements cannot be met by "business as usual." This means far more than that there should be no strikes or lockouts; it also means that business prerogatives must be surrendered if that is necessary in the national interest. The doctrine of "partial emergency" formerly enunciated now gives way to full emergency; we must produce exactly as if we were at war. In saying this, the President closed the switch which releases the maximum national energy.

His message to all Americans ignored the unrealities of the whole debate concerning "keeping out of war" or maintaining "neutrality." What the people want is simpler than that. They want to help Britain to the utmost, and they do not want our boys to have to fight. Mr. Roosevelt emphasized his agreement on both counts and pointed out the obvious truth that the better we do the first, the more chance we shall have of avoiding the second.

Why We Need Britain

TO MANY AMERICANS, aid to Britain, outside of its immediate necessity for purposes of defense, seems mere sentimentalism of the hands-across-the-sea variety. A more far-reaching proposal of planning for economic unity, such as was recently outlined in The New Republic, appears even more fantastic to the isolationist who regards it as both desirable and possible for the United States to be self-sufficient in ideas and economy, or at least self-sufficient in collaboration with the Western Hemisphere. An article in Foreign Affairs by Percy W. Bidwell and Arthur R. Upgren, however, indicates the economic necessity for commercial unification of all the democracies, including the members of the British Commonwealth.

Even before Hitler the continent of Europe was more nearly self-sufficient than Pan-America. In 1937, the foreign trade of the twenty-six European states was 60 percent intra-European and only 40 percent outside the continent. Hitler's determination, accompanied by his power of conquest, could easily maintain a 75-percent self-sufficiency in foreign trade in times of peace. Under war and blockade the percentage is of course even higher than that, though maintained by extensive sacrifice of consumption. On the other hand, the twenty-one republics of the Western Hemisphere, plus Canada, obtained from each other only 43 percent of their imports in 1937, and shipped within the continent only 39 percent of their exports. An attempt at autarchy for this hemisphere would therefore be far more difficult than for Hitlerized Europe.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It is true that non-Russian Europe is dependent on outside sources for an important part of its fats, sugar, tobacco, all its tea, coffee and cocoa, 81 percent of its copper, all its crude rubber, and large amounts of other products. Yet the Western Hemisphere does not produce nearly enough for its own needs of essential materials like antimony, chromite, magnesite, manganese, manila fiber, mercury, potash, quinine, rubber, tin, tungsten or vegetable oils. Even more important, it has a lopsided economy which depends largely on exports of raw materials for the employment of great sections of its population—those engaged in producing cotton, wheat, meat, hides, copper, oil, sugar and coffee. Any effort to create a closed economic system in the Americas would be confronted, under 1937 conditions, with the task of finding markets for $4,100,000,000 worth of exports annually, and of finding substitutes for, or doing without, $3,200,000,000 worth of imports. Even if each nation used all those goods which might be supplied in this hemisphere, before looking elsewhere, the remaining exports would be $2,959,000,000 and the imports $1,882,000,000.

It would be folly either for Europe or the Americas to try to do entirely without trade from the other, but the bargaining position of the western democracies as against a totalitarian empire depends upon the relative needs of both, if the ultimate pressure were applied. Our hand would be immensely strengthened if the United Kingdom were included in our trading bloc. In 1935-37 the British took 62 percent of the wheat going from the Americas across the Atlantic, 90 percent of the meats, and from one-third to one-half of the other principal exports. If the whole British Empire were included, the export surpluses of the western continents would be reduced by half. We should, furthermore, be assured of adequate supplies of jute, manganese, rubber, tin, chromite and tungsten.

These reflections do not imply that we shall have our choice, when the war is over, whether or not to include the British Empire in the American trading system. Rather they mean that if the Axis wrenches it from the orbit in which we revolve, we shall be at a great disadvantage, no matter how closely knit Pan-America and Canada may be. And they show that in the process of organizing a better planned international trade during the war, we may derive enormous help if we invite British coöperation. There need be no fear that in doing so we shall give British imperialism a chance to run away with the show. Britain is in such desperate straits, and is so utterly dependent upon us for economic aid, that we should have only ourselves to blame if we did not impose reasonable conditions and take the leadership in a truly coöperative undertaking.

The plan of improving the economy of the democratic nations by facilitating trade and aiding the industrial growth of the raw-material producing regions will not succeed unless it is radically designed and is aimed not only at abolishing unemployment but at raising the level of living everywhere. To do this while the war is on would give the strongest answer possible to the fascist propaganda.

Hitler boasts of unifying Europe, of introducing a "new order." He scoffs at the internal decadence of the "pluto-democracies." His appeal is largely directed at labor, promising to be as efficient in producing the essentials of a good life when the war is over as he has been at making weapons so far. The democratic states can fail to achieve an equal unity only at their peril. It is their job to show that a coöperative, democratic world unity can offer brighter promise to those who now have little stake in the world's goods than can a unity achieved by conquest and tributary to a "master race." To use our influence in behalf of such a program is by far the greatest contribution this country can make to the conquest of Hitlerism; beside it the struggle to supply enough arms to Britain so that she can hold off the aggressor, crucial as it is for the moment, is a mere prologue to the main drama.

New Tax Powers for the States

LITERARY CRITICS have often noted that Milton was far more interested in Paradise Lost than in Paradise Regained. Perhaps the same principle will explain why the Supreme Court that wrought such unregenerate havoc with New Deal legislation was the object of more dramatic attention than the present Court, which is so quietly laying a foundation in constitutional law for a working twentieth-century democracy. Yet, whatever the explanation, the fact is that there is movement and stir in recent Court decisions which has gone largely unnoticed by the layman. Nowhere is this truer than in the area of tax powers and tax policy, where decisions by Mr. Justice Stone, Mr. Justice Frankfurter and their colleagues have done much to bring realism and clarity where up to now the archaic and chaotic have reigned.

The most recent of the tax decisions, Wisconsin v. J. C. Penney Company, is by any long view an important event. To understand how important, one must start with Wisconsin's problem in state fiscal policy. Wisconsin has an income tax but has exempted dividends from personal taxation. This made it soft for the big income brackets but hard going for the rest and for the state itself. There was already a corporate income tax. Now a demand arose for taxing corporate dividends. But whose? To tax "foreign corporations" —that is, those chartered outside the state but doing business in it—meant to come up against the taboo against interfering with the sovereignty of other states. To tax only domestic corporations meant to put a burden on small concerns which the large chain stores, mail-order houses, insurance companies and national

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

manufacturers doing business in Wisconsin would not have to bear. In 1935 Wisconsin took the plunge and imposed a "privilege dividend tax" of 2.5 percent on domestic and foreign corporations alike, to be paid by the corporation whenever it declared a dividend and to be in proportion to the amount of the total income attributable to Wisconsin. A howl arose from the big chain stores and others, who refused to pay the tax on the ground that it was deprivation of property without due process of law as guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. The J. C. Penney Company case was one of a group which finally got to the Supreme Court.

The Court split five-to-four in what must have been one of the most hotly debated decisions under the present membership. Mr. Justice Frankfurter, who has forged to a position of leadership of the liberal majority, wrote the opinion of the Court, and with him were Justices Stone, Black, Douglas and Murphy. Mr. Justice Roberts dissented, and with him were the Chief Justice and Justices McReynolds and Reed. The Frankfurter opinion is one of his most characteristic. It follows clearly the old dissenting Holmes doctrine, which has now become majority policy on the Court, of judicial self-limitation. "Nothing can be less helpful," the opinion says, "than for courts to go beyond the extremely limited restrictions that the Constitution places upon the states and to inject themselves in a merely negative way into the delicate processes of fiscal policy-making." The task of the states in shaping tax programs in a depression period is hard enough without being made harder by judicial meddling. And here Mr. Justice Frankfurter follows the now classic Brandeis method of economic realism, in asking what the "practical operation" of the tax is—to plug the hole left by dividend exemptions, to equalize the tax burdens both for "foreign" and domestic corporations.

But the heart of the opinion Mr. Justice Frankfurter owes to no predecessor, but to his own intellectual temper and to the spirit of the times which he shares with his colleagues of the majority. Mr. Justice Roberts argues, in his able if somewhat bitter dissenting opinion, that while Wisconsin can tax the income of a foreign corporation, once the residue of that income goes out of the state to the general offices—in New York City, say—it becomes "property," out of the reach of Wisconsin. To this Mr. Justice Frankfurter replies with what is, in its quiet way, one of the most scathing judicial essays on semantics that is to be found in the literature. "What's in a name?" he asks in effect, and adds another protest to the rebellion that has been stirring for some time against the tyranny of judicial words. "The Constitution is not a formulary. It does not demand of states strict observance of rigid categories nor precision of technical phrasing in their exercise of the most basic power of government, that of taxation." Whether you call the Wisconsin tax a "privilege dividend tax" or a "supplementary income tax" makes very little difference. What you are doing is taxing the income of the corporation at two points: one, when the money comes in as profits; two, when it goes out as dividends.

We wish that Mr. Justice Frankfurter had not gone on to try to make out a case for the tax as being an income tax. For in doing so he gets tangled up in verbalisms rather than realism, and lays himself open to attack by Mr. Justice Roberts on the very score of creating artificial legal categories, on which the Court has most erred in the past. He is on much stronger ground when he says outright that it makes little difference where the corporation offices are and where the dividends are declared. "The simple but controlling question is whether the state has given anything for which it can ask return." And the answer is perhaps best expressed by the remark that Mr. Justice Holmes once made to his secretary when asked whether he was not irritated by having to pay taxes. "Young man," he said, "that is the price I pay for civilization."

Corporations have long evaded paying at least part of that price, and the legal fiction of "state sovereignty" and the constitutional phrase "due process" have helped them get away with it. The Court's decision in the Penney case is therefore one of the great steps toward creating a bill of social duties for big property as well as a bill of legal rights. One does not have to have an anti-chain-store animus or subscribe to the Brandeis economic doctrine of the "curse of bigness" to applaud it. Whatever the best size of the business unit, it must pay the price of civilization. Or, to use less high-slung words, the states will now not be as helpless as they were in catching each other's escaping tax-fleas.

Those who say that under the barrage of national defense we have been forgetting about our homegrown problems of democracy had better look at what our Supreme Court has been doing.

THE NEW REPUBLIC
A Journal of Opinion

Editors
BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY GEORGE SOULE
STARK YOUNG

Assistant Editors
NIGEL DENNIS OTIS FERGUSON ELIZABETH HULING

Contributing Editors
H. N. BRAILSFORD JOHN T. FLYNN E. C. LINDEMAN
JONATHAN MITCHELL R. G. TUGWELL

Treasurer: DANIEL MEBANE

E. G. WOOD
Advertising Manager

BYRON DEXTER
Circulation Manager

SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN SUBSCRIPTIONS SIX DOLLARS, FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR

EDITED AND PRODUCED UNDER UNION CONDITIONS BY CONTRACT WITH THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE GUILD, LOCAL 18, UOPWA, CIO

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Race Against Hitler

The most important thing going on in the world today is the struggle to equip Great Britain with arms of all kinds so that she can be more nearly on an equal footing with Germany in the present war. Under the heading above, The New Republic from time to time will report on this effort. – THE EDITORS

PROBABLY most Americans assume that we are doing about as well as possible in supplying military material to Great Britain, and that, on the whole, she is getting substantially as much as she needs. Both these statements are wrong. We are doing far less than we can and should. All our efforts, and all of those from every other quarter, are falling far short of improving Britain's position. Indeed every available indication suggests that she is falling still farther behind.

To be sure, it is difficult to say just how much Britain "needs." She has to be able to resist the German attack and perhaps ultimately to carry the war to the Continent. What quantities of armament are necessary for these purposes depends upon the strategy of the campaign, the quality of the equipment, the morale of the soldiers, and other things difficult to estimate accurately. It is only reasonable, however, to assume that England requires at least as many airplanes, tanks, guns, etc., as Germany has. Is she getting them?

Many Americans act as though Germany had been standing still during all these months while we have been getting ready to begin to help England; but this is not true. Hitler has greatly increased his own strength in war materials during this time. He has also drawn on the resources of all of conquered Europe. We hear a good deal about how he is taking the machinery out of French factories and sending it to Germany; but you may be sure that he is not doing this with armament factories, unless he believes that after the transfer they will soon be producing more than ever.

Here is the story in a nutshell:

In Germany, about one-half of all the working time of the population is put into war products.

In Great Britain, they have at last got up to about the same rate—call it four hours out of an eight-hour working day.

In the United States, we are now putting in thirty minutes of an eight-hour day on war materials—fifteen minutes for Great Britain and fifteen for ourselves.

We are now shipping war goods to Britain at the rate of roughly $200,000,000 worth a month. Germany gets $300,000,000 worth a month from France alone, probably two-thirds of it in materials useful for war in one way or another. From the other conquered countries of Europe (in which category we include Rumania) Hitler is receiving $100,000,000 worth more.

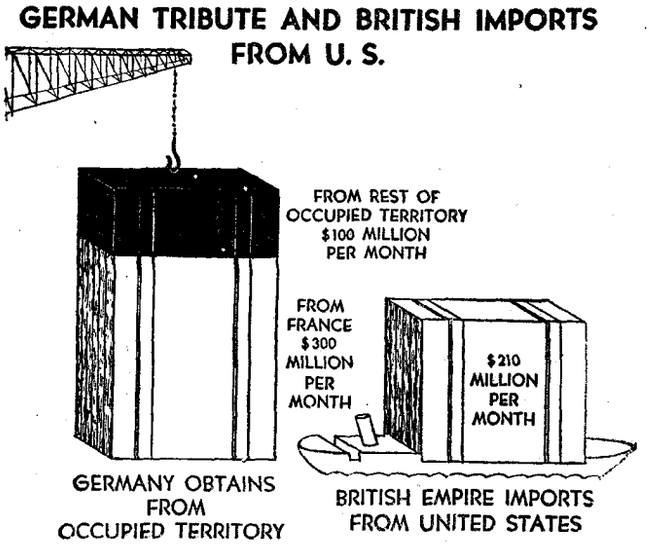
If we live up to schedule—and it is not sure that we shall—we shall be sending to Britain 600 military airplanes per month by next June. Germany is getting about this many at the present time from airplane factories in the conquered countries.

One of the vital necessities for war is steel. In the year ending August 31 last, we shipped 2,400,000 tons to England. In the same time Luxemburg produced for Germany 2,510,000 tons. British and American production for British war purposes combined only equal Germany's own production as it stood before she conquered nearly all of Europe. To be sure, we have tremendous capacity; but you can't win a war with capacity. Britain needs every month 2,500,000 tons of steel—about what we have been sending her per year.

It is easy to show that the United States ought to send to Great Britain up to ten times as much as we have been sending. Our national income is now probably in the neighborhood of $80,000,000,000. Under the impetus of the national-defense program, it could certainly be ninety or a hundred billions. If we produced on the British or German scale, our armament could be worth fifty billions annually. Assuming that we maintained President Roosevelt's 50-50 ratio, Great Britain should get twenty-five billions' worth annually. This is at least ten times as much as we are now sending.

To be sure, fifty billion dollars' worth of armament may seem excessive and we hope it would prove so. But it is better to produce too much than too little; if we produce too little, it is the last mistake free America will ever commit.

GERMAN TRIBUTE AND BRITISH IMPORTS FROM U. S.


FROM REST OF OCCUPIED TERRITORY $100 MILLION PER MONTH
FROM FRANCE $300 MILLION PER MONTH
$210 MILLION PER MONTH
GERMANY OBTAINS FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORY
BRITISH EMPIRE IMPORTS FROM UNITED STATES

The illustration above is from a book by Fritz Sternberg, to be published this month by the John Day Company under the title "How to Save England and Stay Out of the War." It compares what Germany receives from France and the remainder of the occupied territory in Europe, with what the British Empire, including England, is receiving from the United States.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The High Cost of Ships

In these perilous times, Mr. Chairman, we should make government business most attractive.—*Captain C. W. Fisher, U.S.N., Director of Shore Establishments.*

AT AN EXPENDITURE of over six and a half billion dollars, more than three times the total sum spent on naval construction since 1918, Congress has authorized the navy to expand the fighting fleet so that we shall be safe in our two oceans. To reassure the private shipbuilders that they will not have to be drafted in any rude $30-a-month manner, all profit limitations and competitive-bidding requirements have been repealed. The admirals have been given the signal to "negotiate" at full speed ahead with legislative ballast thrown overboard.

Will the 1,600,000 tons of combatant ships, expected by 1947, slide down the ways greased with profiteering, or have we succeeded under the patriotic stimulus of national emergency in harnessing private enterprise to the public interest?

On September 9, when contract awards totaling $3,861,053,312 for 200 warships were announced, it was discovered that about three-fourths of the shipbuilding business was to go to private companies. Until the present crisis, at least half of our fighting ships were required by law to be built in the eight existing government yards. This fattening of the private shipbuilders (whose excess World War profits the government is still trying to recover) was all the more surprising because their yards were already so surfeited with orders that they needed special subsidies to enlarge their capacities. Just prior to the awards, the New York Shipbuilding Company reported unfilled orders sufficient to keep it operating at capacity for eleven years. Yet, instead of expanding the government-owned yards, the Navy Department on October 9 announced that an additional sum of $76,000,000 had been given the private firms to increase their output with government-owned facilities.

Topping the list of naval contractors is Bethlehem Steel Company with orders totaling about one billion dollars—more than a third of the whole private-yard share of the September awards. In addition, Bethlehem is getting $30,000,000 worth of government equipment free of charge. The New York, Federal, and Newport News shipbuilding companies have speared orders ranging from $350,000,000 to $400,000,000 each, apart from the $30,000,000 they are to divide for plant expansion. Government yards were given all seven battleship orders, but they are to build but seventeen of the one hundred and fifteen destroyers, only eight of the forty-three submarines, and none of the eight aircraft-carriers or twenty-seven cruisers.

Even more astounding are the prices exacted by private shipbuilders. Although the navy refused to divulge the specific contract costs, as involving a "military secret" that could not be shared with the paying public, it was "reliably reported" to the newsmen by a "spokesman" that the new aircraft carriers were to cost $47,000,000 each, the cruisers $30,000,000, the destroyers $8,000,000 and the submarines $6,000,000. This was a far cry from the balmy days of 1933 when, at prices that then seemed to the Nye Committee to carry an exorbitant profit, aircraft carriers could be bought for $19,000,000, cruisers for $12,000,000 and destroyers and submarines for $3,000,000.

Battleship costs, too, have skyrocketed. Twenty years ago they were $403 per ton; today the price is $2,543. In 1919, the 33,400-ton battleship Idaho was completed by the New York Shipbuilding Company at a total cost of $13,470,000. Now that same company is building a 35,000-ton battleship at a total cost of $88,997,000. The three battleships now being built in private shipyards (total displacement, 105,000 tons) will cost more than did all the fifteen battleships (displacing 464,300 tons) now in our fleet.

What justification is given for these spiraling costs by the Navy Department when its officials appear before congressional committees to ask for more ships or more money? Asked last January why destroyers cost four times as much now as during the World War, when steel prices were about twice as high and labor costs greater, Admiral Robinson said: "Well, everything in the whole United States seems to be increasing in cost. . . . I cannot account for it. . . . I suppose it is largely due to the increase in labor costs basically."

But the increased cost of labor and materials explain nothing. Hourly wages in shipbuilding have, it is true, risen from 60 to 86 cents since 1933, and steel plates jumped from 1.63 to 2.10 cents a pound. Yet, using 1933 as a base, we find that the 34-percent increase in the labor-materials index is dwarfed by an increase of 90 percent in the cost per ton of aircraft-carriers, of 89 percent in destroyers and of 83 percent in cruisers.

Indexes of cost of labor and materials compared with cost per ton of warships built in private shipyards: 1933-40

	Labor-Materials	Index of Cost Per Ton		
Year	Index[1]	Aircraft Carriers	Cruisers	Destroyers
1933	100	100	100	100
1935	117	147	124	122
1939	131	166	——	142
1940 (July)	133	176	172	165
1940 (Sept.)	134	190	183	189

[1] Determined by combining Bureau of Labor Statistics figures on average hourly wages in the shipbuilding industry with a composite index of the prices of finished steel products and steel plates.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There need be little hesitation in terming these excess costs unjustified. Greater speed, striking power and defensive strength are the only other factors that might explain the discrepancy. But, since 1933, there have been no major improvements in the performance standards of our warships. For example: the aircraft carrier Enterprise, begun in 1933, and the Hornet, begun in 1939, both displace 19,900 tons, have the same designed speed of 34 knots, generate the same 120,000 horsepower, have the same capacity for eighty-three planes and carry eight 5-inch guns. Nevertheless, the Hornet cost $31,800,000, compared with $19,000,000 for the Enterprise. Since the navy has announced that it is expediting shipbuilding by eliminating innovations, the carriers ordered in September, costing $47,000,000 each (or $1,810 per ton compared with the $955 per-ton cost of the Enterprise), will simply be larger and later editions of the older vessels with no radical changes in design.

Destroyers of the Benson class, begun in 1939, had the same designed speed of 36½ knots as those of the Mahan class, begun in 1933, the same number of torpedo tubes, generated 44,000 as compared with the 42,800 horsepower of the earlier vessels, and carried only one more 5-inch gun. The cost per ton of these vessels increased, however, from $2,180 in 1933 to $3,100 in 1939, and has further risen within the past year to well over $4,000 per ton. So, too, light cruisers bought in 1933 had the same tonnage, horsepower, speed and firing power as those begun in 1940, but their cost per ton rose from $1,182 to $2,162.

Allegedly greater complexity of design, more elaborate controls and stronger staying power in battle fail utterly to explain the difference in cost between sister ships like the Enterprise and the Hornet, or between virtually identical cruisers and destroyers. Many improvements, such as better compartmentalization, do not necessarily add to the per-ton cost. And if there are any that do, the Navy Department officials have failed to name them. Certainly, the matter is not clarified when we are told by Admiral DuBose (before the Senate Naval Affairs Committee) that "fire control installations . . . have increased tremendously in price" and then hear from Admiral Furlong (before a subcommittee of the House) that "fire-control equipment cost has been holding about the same since 1926."

By juxtaposing these calculations of indicated excess expenditure and the private companies' share of the present naval-expansion program, we learn the magnitude of what one shipbuilder neatly characterized as "plunder." In September, more than $2,500,000,000 in contracts were awarded. An excessive profit of only 25 percent, far less than the amount indicated by the data on page 10, would come to more than $600,000,000. If we assume that in the base year 1933 the shipbuilders were at the very least making the 12 percent return then permitted by law, their total profit on the recent two-ocean-navy awards should approximate one billion dollars. Easy money, when you consider that in effect all risks of loss are borne by the government and that the extra equipment needed is on the house.

To understand why all this is allowed to happen, one need only remember that (as the Nye Committee found in 1936, and as is still the case) "the navy has never examined the underlying costs or profits of the private builders. . . . It makes no pretense of doing this . . . has no staff for it." Coupled with the frank admission of the shipbuilders that "when there is lots of work to go around the charges go up," the abolition of competitive bidding and of profit ceilings goes a long way toward clearing up the mystery.

Of course, by using the existing navy yards as a yardstick, the government could know when and for how much it was being held up. But the Navy Department does not seem to want to know, though it has plenty of evidence in its files. When Admiral Land was asked by a House subcommittee to compare shipbuilding costs in government and private shipyards, he replied with poetic imagination: ". . . the fluctuations of the curves of comparison are like the waves of the sea. In many cases they reveal higher costs in navy yards, and in a few cases they reveal lower costs in navy yards. . . . The balance is, so far as cost is concerned, in favor of the private yards."

This testimony is refuted in data given the House Appropriations Committee a few months ago by the Navy Department itself. Six virtually identical 35,000-ton battleships are now under construction, three at government-operated and three at private yards. The average cost of hull and machinery for each government-built ship is $41,237,000; for each privately constructed ship, $61,391,000. There is an excess cost of over $20,000,000, or about 50 percent, on each ship, though wages average slightly higher in the government yards. It may be true that increased battleship costs since 1920 are due to structural differences that make the older craft comparable to a gas engine and the new ones to a jeweled watch. But here we are comparing two watches.

One of these 35,000-ton privately built vessels, the South Dakota, is to cost $88,997,000 when completely fitted out with armor, armament and ammunition. At a Senate Hearing on the 1940 Naval Appropriation Bill, Senator Byrnes asked why a 45,000-ton battleship to be built in government yards should cost only $83,000,000 despite its greater size and power. Admiral DuBose found a ready answer. The joker was the "statistical overhead" not included in the navy-yard computation. What this term means has never been made clear; it apparently refers to the cost of office work and salaries in the Navy Department at Washington. Why these running expenses (the greater part of which, as Commander Hamilton and Admiral Furlong emphasized, would have been incurred in any case)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

should be charged to the ships the navy builds for itself is evidently a "military secret." Are they not more than offset by the supervisory and inspection costs involved in private shipbuilding? Yet, even if the "statistical overhead" averages as high on a battleship as Admiral DuBose said it did ($2,760,000 on the 35,000-tonners), there would still remain an overcharge of almost $52,000,000 on the Massachusetts, Indiana and South Dakota.

A few months ago Commander Hamilton told a House Committee he was not the least disturbed that the navy could build 45,000-ton ships at a lower cost than it could buy 35,000-ton ships. "This," he said, "appears to be reasonable and about what should be expected."

Does this mean that our admirals regard as "reasonable" the prospect that we shall have to defend our shores with less powerful and fewer fighting craft than they like to tell us we need? If so, it is probably most unreasonable to ask why since 1933 the cost of destroyers built by private enterprise has been allowed consistently to average almost 20 percent higher than exactly the same types of ships produced in government yards.

Cost of Destroyers Built in Government-Owned and Private Shipyards: 1933-39
(By classes of destroyers)

		Average Cost[1] Per Vessel	
Year Begun	*Class Name*	*Gov't. Yards*	*Private Yards*
1933	Mahan	$3,800,000	$4,550,000
1934	Craven	3,945,000	4,385,000
1935	"	4,750,000	4,880,000
1936	Sims	4,625,000	5,525,000
1937	Benson	5,025,000	6,500,000
1938	"	5,490,000	6,535,000
1939	"	5,440,000	6,320,000

Under crisis conditions, extension of government enterprise may be thought subversive of the national interest. But to increase the navy's existing shipbuilding facilities to carry the major load of the expansion program would not be to embark on uncharted seas of public policy. Government yards have a long record of efficiency and economy; they are going concerns. Why have we not disinterred the recommendation of the Nye Committee: that we move in the direction of enlarged navy-yard facilities while permitting the private entrepreneurs to operate at their present capacity under strict cost-accounting supervision to prevent abuse of public funds?

Standing in the way of any such reforms, as Senator Bone reminded the Senate Naval Affairs Committee last May, is not so much the influence of the private shipbuilders as of their partisans and protectors in the Navy Department itself. In 1937, when Bone introduced a bill for the expenditure of only $27,000,000 to expand the navy yards, he was told by the admirals that it was "contrary to our policy of national defense" to take such a step. In plainer language, it is a violation of the Navy Department's policy of national defense to get one extra battleship for every two built in private yards, one cruiser or destroyer free for every five bought.

It would be unfair to assume, however, that the navy has not struggled to expedite shipbuilding. Last May, it sponsored a measure to relax the profit limitations on naval contractors. Unfortunately for the peace of mind of the admirals, Senator Tobey manifested a disturbing curiosity concerning the proposal. In response to his queries, the Judge Advocate General of the Navy Department admitted that the measure had been brought forward "at the instigation of the naval contractors themselves . . . not the Navy Department, not the Treasury Department, but the naval contractors." When asked what evidence the shipbuilders had adduced to indicate that the proposed law would really expedite shipbuilding, or to justify its sponsorship by the navy officials, the Judge Advocate replied: "Nothing at all; I simply took their word."

At about the same time Captain Fisher was urging the Naval Affairs Committee on behalf of the Navy Department to expedite shipbuilding by repealing all laws that provide for the payment on naval construction projects of the prevailing wage for the industry and of time-and-a-half for overtime. But Captain Fisher did not stop there. He zealously advocated the "temporary sacrifice" for the "duration of the crisis" of all efforts to "prevent undue profits, to prevent exploitation of labor, to destroy monopolies and to better sociological and economic conditions in the country. . . ."

When, on M-Day, our fleet is drawn up to guard these shores against the armadas of Hitler and Hirohito we shall have to seek consolation for any insufficiency of our navy in the thought that, in spite of hell and high water, "we have, Mr. Chairman, made government business most attractive."

MELVIN M. FAGEN and BENJAMIN POST

[1] Total cost of hull and machinery only. Estimated by the Navy Department.

Quid Factum Est, Quod Tu Proiectis, Iuppiter, Armis

Can it indeed be, Jove, you have grown old?
Now if ever were the moment to put on
Brute forehead and the bull's horns, or unfold
The outrageous beauty of a busking swan.

This is the only Danaë. Desire
To touch her body where she lies—and all
That once was god, involved in such a fire,
Must change to fame and as a gold rain fall.

—*From the Latin of Petronius Arbiter*

JOHN PEALE BISHOP

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

They're in the Army Now

FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS close to a million young men a year will be poured into the great molding machine of the United States army. Now that there is no turning back, we ask ourselves, will they come out as robots trained only in the use of force, jobless, an easy prey to some home-grown Führer? Or can these American boys of all classes, creeds and national backgrounds be taught, by some miracle of planning, even while they are learning the uncivilized arts of warfare, to value democracy as something more than a catch-phrase, and to take their places in a free society?

So far neither the War Department nor the administration has announced a constructive plan. The fanfare in the newspapers of December 4 over Paul McNutt's new assignment misled more than a few readers. His efforts to coördinate welfare work for the defense forces will be limited to the communities outside the training camps. All leisure-time and extra-military activities within the camps will remain the province of the Morale Division of the army, of which Colonel H. H. Pfeil is the chief.

Asked about the army's plans for educating the draftees, Major Hinman, assistant to Colonel Pfeil, and Colonel Rose of the Adjutant General's office, gave me to understand that the army will have its hands full, instructing, within the short space of twelve months, green civilians in mechanized warfare. They felt confident that military discipline, respect for the flag and a sense of obligation to his country are all the training in democratic citizenship a draftee needs.

The army's "broad recreation program," to which Colonel William H. Draper of the General Staff referred in a recent speech, is to consist, so far as it is planned, of movies, dances, hostess houses, camp theatricals and athletics. It is thought that this type of recreation with a capital R will be all that tired bodies will want. For boys who like to read, camp libraries will be available, the books to be selected by army officers with some advice from the American Library Association. The accent is to be on fiction, biography and travel, and books on controversial political and social questions will be few and far between.

If this were the last word from the army, there would be ground for despair. In point of fact, the General Staff is sensitive to the pressure being applied by educators and certain New Dealers. General Marshall himself is reported to be open-minded about a revision of the program along broader lines. Word comes from Mr. Clarence A. Dykstra, Director of Selective Service, that "the General Staff is now discussing the question of an especially appointed committee . . . representative of educational and recreational groups, to discuss with the staff a program for the camps."

To a certain extent, Mr. Dykstra backs up the army officers' defense when he says, "In all fairness, it should be stated that the army is not getting any men who are under twenty-one at this time, and that our schools have had these men up until that time under our universal compulsory educational program." Yet Mr. Dykstra, himself a university president, would be the last to deprecate the need for adult education generally, or, more specifically, among our drafted youth. Let us remember that sixteen is the age limit for compulsory school attendance in our most advanced states, and that in the South all attendance laws are a mockery.

Mr. Dykstra adds that "a part of the training of some of the men will doubtless have a relation to vocations which men can follow . . . in civilian life. With the increasing mechanization of the army, there is a natural opportunity for a considerable number."

It is true that the draftees will be classified more carefully than they were in 1917. If a draftee can show that he is a competent amateur radio operator, he will be put in the Signal Corps. A lawyer or a clerk may be assigned to the Quartermaster Corps, and so on. In this way the army hopes to utilize whatever skills the individual draftee possesses, and help him keep his hand in.

While the army now calls for many trades and skills which have their counterpart in business and industry, it still is true, as Colonel Draper has said, that the "army is not made up entirely of specialists." "A very large percentage of men," he concedes, "carry a rifle and are the backbone of the . . . entire army."

It will follow that the many young men who enter the army from the ranks of the unemployed, will be thrown back into civilian life without jobs or marketable skills. With this dilemma in mind, Dr. John Erskine proposed in an article in the October Reader's Digest that the draftees be allowed, after a six months' shakedown, to devote half their day to vocational or cultural classes of their own choosing. But this hardly seems practical, in view of the complexities of mechanized warfare.

Looking toward the draftees' readjustment to civilian life, Mr. Dykstra has given assurance that "every available facility of the federal, state and local governments will be enlisted under a nationwide coördinated plan providing for return of an old job or provision of a new one for every draftee."

It is to be hoped that employers who have promised to take back workers on their return from the camps, will be able to make good when a post-armament slump hits them. For the men who have no jobs to go back to and no special skills, a special program of vocational training, preferably given by civilian institutions at government expense, will need to be pro-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vided. Then jobs of some kind—made work if necessary—will have to be found for them, if we are to escape the threat that might come from hordes of unemployed young men trained to use weapons and no other tools.

While his daytime hours must be devoted to carrying a rifle, the draftee will still have the evenings after six o'clock at his disposal. Every camp is to have one or more movie theatres where the men will see "A" and "B" features along with second-run newsreels of small-town vintage. Admission price will be 14 cents. The boys will be free to rig up their own radios in their quarters, borrow books from the camp library, and to entertain mothers, sisters and girl-friends in a hostess house. This house will be built in each camp to provide rooms for visitors at a moderate price.

In the last war, the Commission on Training Camp Activities under Raymond Fosdick, through its affiliated welfare organizations, took charge of recreation in the camps and promoted such educational activities as language classes. This time, General Marshall announced in a recent broadcast, "there will be no competing organizations on the military reservations. . . . The army will provide the recreational facilities."

It is in the peripheral communities outside the camps that the welfare organizations have been urged by General Marshall "to coöperate to develop wholesome places for the soldier to go for his entertainment." This area alone will be open to the newly formed National United Welfare Committee for Defense.

The National Welfare Committee will be expected to work with Paul McNutt and his aids. If recreation rooms, theatres and play areas are needed in small communities, the NYA will help build them and the WPA will help staff them. At the same time, a newly appointed morale officer, Colonel Kemper Williams, has been delegated to watch the trainees' activities outside the camps and to check unhealthy tendencies.

The army claims it can take care of its own inside the camps. Yet its program to date falls short of what will be needed. If movies are to be the chief attraction in the camps and theatricals and musicals are limited, as is usual, to the talented few, the daily recreation of the large majority of the draftees, except for competitive athletics, will be non-participatory in character.

In each camp the leisure-time program will depend to a considerable degree on the good sense and imagination of the camp commander and the commander of the corps area, under the decentralization scheme which has been worked out. Camp Dix is probably a fair example, since the responsible officers there expressed views similar to those I heard in the War Department. At Camp Dix, I was told, only the study of military subjects would be promoted. An atmosphere of mental inertia lay over the camp even though most of the officers, belonging to the Reserve and the National Guard, were fresh from business jobs. A major who conducts a marine-insurance business in civilian life confessed that he never looks at a newspaper in camp, while in New York he reads two a day.

Another major, a broker in civilian life who seemed hardly fitted to direct the army trades classes, indicated that the draftees will be contented enough if they are well fed and their physical welfare is looked after. (There may be something in this: a boy whose family is on relief cannot hope for dental or medical care, but he will get all the attention he needs in the army.)

It must be admitted that army officers as a class (and this goes for at least some of the Reserve and National Guard officers) lack the necessary understanding of our democratic processes—of our Bill of Rights, for instance—to be qualified to teach citizenship. Their patriotism tends to be of the flag-waving, my country-right-or-wrong variety. Even the more enlightened officers would rather not touch the thorny subject for fear of getting mixed up in politics. "It is not our job," Major Hinman of the Morale Division said to me, "to teach the men in the army what is right. It is simply our job to teach them to fight for what is right, as laid down by the government."

In the CCC camps, the American Youth Commission has found in an exhaustive study, formal evening classes for youth employed all day in strenuous physical work have made very little appeal. Still it can be argued, as Howard Braucher of the National Recreation Association does, that "provision should be made for the minority in the training camps who would be willing to devote their spare time to working hard at regular scholastic courses." He would like to see "music, drama and special courses related to subjects with which the soldiers will need to deal."

Just how the boys shall be given citizenship training is an open question. Certainly if the army officers have their way and nothing is done to instil the democratic ideal in our drafted soldiers—many of whom will have found that our form of democracy could not provide them even with jobs—they will lack the drive, the dedication to a cause, which has impelled Nazi youth to die for ideals we believe to be false.

In the opinion of Frederick L. Redefer of the Progressive Education Association, "courses should be offered in current events and problems related to the present emergency should be taken up." He recommends "historical courses showing the struggle for liberty in the United States and the development of our free institutions." Discussion could be included here of the advances made during the past eight years in social security, rehabilitation of farm population, the spread of public works, housing, rural electrification, etc. The media would be formal lectures, documentary films and informal group discussions.

To carry out this program, Mr. Redefer would like to see a civilian army of our best progressive educators

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

recruited and commissioned by the army for the emergency. This policy has been followed in the case of the chief librarian, Mr. Ray L. Trautman, who has been given a lieutenant's commission in the Reserves and is now attached to the Morale Division.

It has been suggested that plays, movies and pageants emphasizing democratic ideals could be prepared by such masters of their craft as Robert Sherwood, Charlie Chaplin and Louis Schaeffer of Labor Stage. Such pageants and plays might, however, become vehicles for government propaganda. Mr. Redefer thinks this danger would be obviated if "the educational program also included civic education in the broadest sense and training in the democratic technique of discussion." In this connection he urges that the draftees be allowed to select the books for their libraries, with the help of their educational leaders. "If children in progressive schools are now doing this, why not allow grown men to do it as well?"

Training in democracy seems an anomaly in the army, where discipline, which appears to be nine-tenths of military training, is authoritative. Talk about "a people's army" comes close to wish-fulfilment. Commands must be handed down and instantly obeyed. To offset the psychological dangers of military discipline, Mr. Redefer recommends "discussion and frank recognition of the necessity for commands and obeying at certain times." He thinks the draftees should be taught that there are "limits for militaristic behavior."

Here, at least, are some of the possibilities to be considered by the committee which Mr. Dykstra says the General Staff is thinking of appointing. Its field will be as wide as America if it can devise ways and means for making a year of army training a broadly educational experience.

Even those of us who are not military-minded must concede that military training will be good for young America's physique, so long as epidemics can be prevented. Personal cleanliness and good health habits will be inculcated, and the army discipline may have some value as character training, although it will fall short of self-discipline. And selective service should, by mingling all classes, have a democratizing influence.

Yet it is plain that military training, which is the science of killing, cries out for an antidote. Our young men must be turned out of the army machine not robots, but citizens free to think and vote for themselves, zealous in their respect for the rights of minorities, and dedicated to the creation of a juster social order than we now have. Unless we work toward this end, we shall invite the destruction of our free institutions by the very men who have been mobilized to defend what we glibly call democracy, and to impose it, perchance, on other peoples in a far-flung sphere of influence. DOROTHY DUNBAR BROMLEY

Obituary Notice

IN A MINING TOWN near Cadiz, Ohio, thirty-one company houses are filled with mourners. They are the families of the men who were trapped by an explosion in the Nelms mine of the Ohio-Pennsylvania Coal Company. The death warrant for those miners was written in Washington, D. C.

Several weeks ago, the House Committee on Mines and Mining talked over the Neely-Keller mine-safety bill, killed it, and slid it back into a subcommittee grave. Representative Jennings Randolph, a member of the committee, set to work to get the bill before the House the hard way. Working with labor organizations, Randolph got 211 Representatives to sign a petition to take the bill out of the committee's hands. Seven more names were needed to get it before the House for debate and vote. So the mine operators and the insurance companies got busy, and within a few days the National Coal Association got fourteen Representatives to withdraw their names. Now the bill is dead, like the 1,576 men killed in the mines since it was introduced last May.

Neither sponsor of the mine-safety bill will be in Washington this year to carry on the fight for its passage. Representative Keller was defeated in the recent elections and Senator Neely has moved from the Senate to the Governor's mansion in West Virginia.

The mine-safety bill isn't violent legislation. It merely gives federal authorities the right to inspect mines from time to time, and publish their findings. Yet the coal operators have used everything but an elephant gun to impede the bill's passage.

On May 16, 1939, the bill was introduced in the House by Representative Keller and in the Senate by Senator Neely. It wasn't until a year from that date that a subcommittee of the Committee on Mines and Mining began to hold hearings. Finally, on August 15, fourteen months after the Mines Committee got the bill, a report was rendered.

While the bill was pending, there were newspaper stories for Representatives to read:

July 14, 1939: Explosion in a mine of the Duvin Coal Company, Providence, Kentucky. 28 dead.

January 10, 1940: Explosion in the Bartley Mine, Pine Creek Pocahontas Company, McDowell County, West Virginia. 91 dead.

March 16, 1940: Explosion at the Willow Grove Mine, M. A. Hanna Company, Neffs, Ohio. 72 dead.

July 15, 1940: Explosion at the Sonman Mine, Kop-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pers Coal Company, Cambria County, Pennsylvania. 63 dead.

Add to the toll ten men who were killed in an Arkansas mine this August. Add 1,274 more, killed in the mines last year. They weren't on any newspaper casualty list. When less than ten die, there are no discussions and no announcements. The deaths are recorded by the Bureau of Mines, and no questions asked. A small, unimportant accident—six or seven men dying in an out-of-the-way mine shaft—doesn't count. And the mangled, the misshapen, the gassed and crippled—they aren't on the lists. They just exist.

Every time a miner is killed in Great Britain, we kill three. Every time a miner is killed in France, we kill four. Every time a miner is killed in the Netherlands, we kill six. Those countries have national mine-inspection laws.

Governor Holt of West Virginia went to Washington to tell the subcommittee that his state mine-inspection department was excellent, and that federal inspection would be costly and repetitious. Fremont Davis, president of a powerful United Mine Workers local, went to Washington too, but didn't get a hearing. So no one got the chance to point out what Governor Holt neglected to mention: that mine inspectors are political appointees, and that the state legislature has never appropriated enough money to support the mine-inspection department. West Virginia law requires that all mines be inspected every ninety days. But the mine-inspection board has only enough finances to inspect mines every five months. Partial inspection of the mines every ninety days might be possible, but the state's attorney has discouraged it.

Something else the Governor forgot: with mechanization coming in, mines develop six times as fast as they did in the days when the state inspection laws were framed. In the old days, a miner could hear the weight shifting in his section of the mine, and have some warning when a "fall" was coming. With the giant machine loaders jarring the passage, banging and clanking, the men running the machines can't "hear the weight coming into place." The constant shaking of the machines creates new hazards, calling for more frequent inspection. Mining experts say that mines should now be inspected every thirty days. The Bartley Mine had not been inspected for three months before the disaster.

Some of the larger companies can afford to hire their own inspectors, and some of them do. But the wildcat companies work fast and chase quick profits. They tell the miners, "Get the coal out any way you can, mister, but get it out!" And the dead lie silent, asking no questions.

MILL LAMPELL

Dr. Millis: Scientist of Labor

IN REVERSE FASHION, the appointment of Dr. Harry A. Millis as chairman of the National Labor Relations Board was sensational. What made it sensational was that it evoked comparative calm. Before Dr. Millis' nomination, employer groups, the AFL, the CIO, a large part of the Senate and House, had been locked for months in a seemingly hopeless tangle over whether or not the then NLRB head, Mr. Madden, should be named for a second term. It was thought that whatever was done, there would be outcries, protests, bitterness. But when finally Dr. Millis' name was brought forward, all groups miraculously professed themselves pleased. All, that is, except a half-dozen Madden partisans within the NLRB itself, who honorably resigned.

There must be very few persons in any sector of society with Dr. Millis' reputation for fair-dealing. In part, at least, this reputation comes from the fact that Dr. Millis has stuck to a single-minded career all his life, and has lived sixty-seven years. When he was a student of nineteen, he began weighing, measuring and describing labor organizations and labor problems, and has now been at it nearly half a century. When he speaks, he does so from a richness of experience that hardly another man in the country can equal.

When he was not yet twenty-one, Dr. Millis sat on committees with bearded men who had helped Master Workman T. V. Powderly direct the balloon-like course of the Knights of Labor. In the 1890's, he watched the young, lusty AFL in its genuinely heroic struggle to establish craft unionism, watched Mr. Gompers' rise to power. A short generation later, just before the First World War, he saw at close range the AFL beat down the mass sweep of the IWW; still another short generation later, in 1935, he watched the split between AFL and CIO. No one can tell Dr. Millis that this or that turning of the labor movement means the deluge. He has seen the same thing, or something very like it, before.

Besides his long association with labor, people probably trust Dr. Millis because of his physical appearance. He is a great, gray mastiff of a man, vast and mountainous. Although he lacks the lumberman's peaked cap, he vaguely resembles, in his benignity, Hawthorne's Great Stone Face. He smokes a pipe, stretches back in his chair; his talk is slow, mellow. But the real reason for the universal confidence he arouses is that he is a scientist, with a scientist's jealous regard for fact, and facts, while usually painful, are reassuring.

It is possible that one of the reasons for Dr. Millis'

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

implacable clarity of attitude toward the labor movement is that he himself has never been a worker and does not come from a worker's family. His father was an Indiana farmer, and Dr. Millis grew up a farm boy. Later his father became a merchant, selling hardware and farm implements, and was successful and well-to-do. Young Millis was sent to Indiana University; in his first year, he showed himself a nascent genius in mathematics and was encouraged to make mathematics his lifework. But still in the first year, his path crossed that of Professor John R. Commons, and the latter's flaming curiosity about the society in which he lived touched off a fire within Millis.

Millis spent vacations as a settlement worker in nearby Cincinnati. He was big, rugged, self-reliant—then and for many years later he was a powerful baseball player—and he was determined to get to the bottom of the poverty and misery he found. He sold savings stamps and managed a mortgage-loan association, so that he could enter into the homes and lives of the people he was studying. It was in Cincinnati that he was a fellow committee member of the bearded Knights of Labor.

After being graduated from Indiana University in 1895, he went to Chicago for his Ph.D in economics. There he lived in the stockyards, knew the stockyards workers and belonged to the Hull House circle. Within the university, his co-worker was the brilliant Thorstein Veblen. Later, when he had begun to teach economics at Stanford University in California, and had "worked up" its first course in labor problems on a week's notice, he was instrumental in bringing Veblen to the Stanford faculty. At Stanford, Dr. Millis conducted the first of the great investigating jobs for which he is famous. As representative of the Bureau of Immigration, he had forty investigators studying immigration problems on the Pacific Coast, and left the subject sucked dry. In 1916, he returned to the University of Chicago; he has been head of its department of economics since 1928.

When Mr. Roosevelt took office in 1933, Dr. Millis had behind him a long record as a gifted labor arbitrator, notably as a former head of the arbitration board of the Chicago men's clothing industry. When the NRA Labor Board changed into the present NLRB, he—together with the present Solicitor General, Mr. Biddle, and Professor Garrison of Wisconsin—was named to membership. He was an author of the NLRB's policy of encouraging industrial unionism.

In many ways, Dr. Millis' return to the NLRB as chairman must have been for him an unhappy duty. There is little doubt that Mr. Madden, whom he has succeeded, was the victim of injustice. The NLRB had been torn by internal quarrels, the result of pressures converging on it from the outside. But the internal conflict was between Commissioners Smith and Leiserson. Opposition to Mr. Madden came either as a roundabout means of hitting at Mr. Smith, or else from hatred of the NLRB and all it stood for. In agreeing to succeed Mr. Madden, Dr. Millis was, in a sense, conniving at a wrongful act. This is why NLRB Secretary Witte and his fellows resigned when Dr. Millis was appointed.

But—while all this is true—nothing would be more mistaken than to judge that Dr. Millis' chairmanship betokens a tractable NLRB. He is a statistical wizard, a research man, a scientist, and a scientist acts not in the realm of emotional justice, but in the realm of the possible, within which labor has almost limitless spaces to occupy and conquer. You hear today in reactionary mouths that management has such-and-such duties and responsibilities, that labor must not infringe on them. Repeatedly, in his long career, Dr. Millis has exposed the hollowness of employers' dicta. As labor moves forward, he will be at its side. JONATHAN MITCHELL

Heat

This is the hottest day. The golden-glow
Will turn to molten gold,
The yucca's white will melt and flow,
And meadow-rue, too thick to blow,
Will hang and fall. The gleaming cold
Of deerwood flower, close to leaf,
Will burn the smooth wood's bark, and grief
Will scald the coreopsis' heart.

Even the king-bird, quick to start
On cooler days, will feel the weight
Of fiery dampness on his wings,
The chewink's song will drag in air,
His bright breast fade, and everywhere
The sun will choke the throat that sings.

Clean thrust of honeysuckle's tongue
Will limply feel the ooze of light,
The clinging moisture slowly wrung
From heaven's furnace. And the bright
And brilliant tiger-lily's flare
Will pale and shrivel. Through the glare
Men move upon the fields and lift
What loads there are. Their patience lives
Poised and alone through the slow drift
Of terrible light. What nature gives
They take as men, the withering and the growth—
And in them is a spirit stronger than both.

GEORGE ABBE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Appeasement Tropism

IT IS EASY ENOUGH to accuse that growing group of Americans now huddling around General Robert E. Wood's America First Committee of being appeasers. Actually, most of them will apply naughty names to Hitler as fervidly as the next man. Indeed the group seeks to shrive itself of the appeasement taint by protesting its "bitter hatred of totalitarianism" in the same advertisements by which it tries to stop the shipment of supplies to England. It is interested, it says, solely in "peace"; the peace lariat is wide enough to gather into a single ring Henry Ford (until the other day) and the daughter of John L. Lewis, General Hugh S. Johnson and Oswald Garrison Villard, John T. Flynn and Thomas N. McCarter, chairman of the board of the Public Service Corporation of New Jersey, Alice Roosevelt Longworth and Mrs. Burton K. Wheeler. They are not for appeasement. They are for peace and for the defense of America, two laudable objectives. Yet one inordinately interesting characteristic is shared by most of this group; and it must not be overlooked. Its chief members, including some with faint liberal overtones, are men and women who have, by and large, been horrified rather than pleased by recent expansive movements in American life, from "made work" to economic planning.

The group takes its present stand on the issue of peace v. war. It is not hard to guess what its position would be on a number of issues seemingly unrelated to the question of peace v. war. It would, on the whole, probably throb with as vigorous hate for a plan to put all of America's unemployed to work at public expense, as it now throbs with hate for something it calls "war." One is constrained to hunt down the fear that rides the members of this group and to conclude, perhaps, that it is only in part a fear of war. Fear of change in a world madly changing might be a more accurate analysis. One does not like to psychoanalyze, but when one sees the name of Henry Ford signed to an advertisement (The New York Times, November 1, 1940) solemnly warning that if war comes, "labor's hard-won gains will be relinquished one by one," one wonders what is up. This is the same Ford now fighting off the Labor Relations Board and resisting a desperate effort to organize his plant; if that effort succeeds it shall have been hard-won indeed.

There is no doubt that Henry Ford sincerely hates war, as sincerely as he hates labor unions; the two hatreds add up to a deep love for the *status quo*. This love for the *status quo* warms the America First Committee's advertisements. The harr-r-r-r-rumphing General Johnson, the wintry Charles Francis Adams, the individualist Ford are all men who feel that they shall have arrived at the best of all possible worlds if only they can win the next election; that nothing is wrong with America except its aggravating desire for social reform. It is to be noted, for example, that some of the Committee's members have from time to time made contact with the New Deal, but almost always during its least progressive moments. General Johnson was the head of NRA, a mad endeavor to freeze forever business's *status quo* with a few wage-hour trimmings for palatability; Mr. John T. Flynn, who did not like NRA, seeks from the New Deal only an improved version of Teddy Roosevelt's anti-monopoly campaign. It would be hard to find in all of American life a group more devoted, by and large, to various versions of yesterday than the roster of America First membership. The business people who started the movement are definitely partisans of the past; the liberals won over are hardly friends of the future.

It is a libel against appeasers to say that appeasement springs from a desire to help Hitler. That was not true, even in France. It springs from just this desire to maintain a threatened *status quo*, which might go up in smoke in the fires of war or, conceivably, in the fires of too large and too costly a defense program. If we look for traitors we shall not find the real appeasers. We must seek, instead, for those men and women who are afraid of social change and social planning, afraid of the political power of labor, afraid of the logical evolution of the democratic process, afraid, in a word, of the future, and devoted desperately to that one of the ten or twelve American pasts which happens to come closest to their private dream. Find those who have, on the whole, not been afraid of the driving power of creative democracy, and you will find, on the whole men and women who want desperately to save England; find those who have been afraid of recent changes (afraid, that is, of America) and you will find something like the America First Committee.

Here is what might be called the appeasement tropism, revealed, in another place, by the singular lack of interest in the defense program displayed at the recent Congress of American Industry. It is a true social tropism; it turned up in England, where Prime Minister Chamberlain's big-business "control officers" quickly froze the armament effort to inexpensive futility, trying much more desperately to keep the annual cost of the war below two billion pounds, than to win it. It showed up in France, where industry rejected the Front Populaire's offer of loans for expansion. Those who fear the future are not anxious to help a neighbor to fight for it. It is important to note how the policy of poor friends of the people at home meshes with the needs of enemies of the people abroad.

SAMUEL GRAFTON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Washington Notes

Maybe the Bear Doesn't Sleep

NO AGENCY keeps its secrets so well as the State Department. There is reason to think that, in hidden ways, it is deeply and intimately involved in the affairs of Chungking and Tokyo, on one side of the world, and of Vichy and Bucharest—to say nothing of the remaining European capitals—on the other. Of all the State Department's delicate endeavors, however, the most baffling are those that concern Moscow.

Last summer and autumn, our relations with Russia were relatively thorny. Ambassador Oumansky persistently and angrily demanded that the administration release certain machine tools, manufactured to Russia's order, that had been commandeered by the War Department. Undersecretary Welles, who conducted the conversations with Mr. Oumansky, did not want to hand them over without assurances that they would not find their way to Germany. As the representative of a great power, Mr. Oumansky declined to be third-degreed.

Within the last month or so, however, an improvement in American-Russian relations has been quietly brought about. The first clue—little noticed at the time—was Moscow's permission to establish an American consulate at Vladivostok. It is to be in charge of Mr. Angus Ward, a veteran of the American Embassy at Moscow. Now a report comes from Shanghai that Vladivostok, the Transsiberian railroad and the Soviet motor-truck routes across Outer Mongolia are going to be used as a supply route for the armies of Chiang Kai-shek. Although not officially confirmed here, the report is thought to be correct. The Vladivostok-Outer Mongolian route is potentially as valuable to China as the Burma Road. If Moscow permits a considerable volume of war supplies to pass along it, it will mean that Stalin is now ready to take a more openly anti-Japanese stand than at any time since the outbreak of the European struggle.

To jump halfway around the world—tantalizingly skimpy details of M. Laval's dismissal from the Pétain government at Vichy are now becoming known. Our government's policy is being determined by former Ambassador William C. Bullitt, and, according to report, Mr. Bullitt has been a remarkable prophet. At the end of last summer—within eight weeks of the fall of France—Mr. Bullitt apparently divined that ultimately Marshal Pétain would break with the Laval group, and would himself faithfully resist the attempts of Ambassador Abetz to draw France back into the war on the German side.

When, soon afterwards, Mr. Bullitt returned to the United States for the presidential campaign, he praised Marshal Pétain heartily. Mr. Bullitt saw clearly the advantage of bolstering the old Marshal's prestige for the exact struggle for power with M. Laval's group that has now taken place. According to explanations made here, neither Mr. Bullitt nor the State Department has any illusions about Marshal Pétain's power. Hitler is master; what the German army says, any French government must do. Nevertheless, Marshal Pétain has a few definite bargaining points. If he is removed by the Germans, France might readily dissolve in internal anarchy. In North Africa, General Weygand recognizes Marshal Pétain, and him only, as his chief. In Washington's view, there is something worth saving out of the French wreck. Our new ambassador to Vichy, Admiral Leahy, constitutes a Roosevelt-Bullitt reclamation squad.

Mr. Roosevelt is understood to have committed himself to two domestic reforms during the coming session of Congress, old-age pensions and youth training. Senator Downey of California, the recognized old-age-pension leader in the upper chamber, has had several conferences with Mr. Roosevelt about the coming pension program. According to Mr. Downey, the President is prepared to have the federal government increase its present pension contribution—which now depends on the amounts put up by each state—to a flat thirty dollars the country over. Even if the states appropriate no more money than at present, a thirty-dollar federal contribution would mean the doubling or tripling of old-age pensions in the South.

Apparently Mr. Roosevelt's youth program will be built around the National Youth Administration and the CCC without marked changes. Other depression-born agencies of the government, however, will be slowly curtailed as the war boom grows. The WPA, according to the administration's supposed plans, will be largely demobilized. But the NYA and the CCC are to have a permanent status, and adequate appropriations.

Opinion is divided on whether organized labor has received proper representation in the new Office for Production Management for Defense. Both AFL and CIO leaders have taken a questioning attitude. It is true that Sidney Hillman is a minority of one on a four-man committee. Will his advice be listened to? Those familiar with the personalities of the three other members of the OPMD say that it will. Mr. Knudsen was operating head of General Motors during the 1937 sit-down strike; United Auto Workers officials believe they have an accurate appreciation of his feeling toward unionism. They say that he is obtuse and insensitive toward the whole meaning of the labor movement. His social conscience has seemingly a blind side. On the other hand, he is a good man to deal with, approachable, honest, non-vindictive. Mr. Stimson leans heavily on Under-secretary Patterson, who labor experts say has revealed a surprisingly liberal cast of mind. Mr. Patterson had nominal responsibility for the $2,000,000 Bantam-car contract given to Ford about a month ago. Mr. Hillman is understood to have made an exceedingly stiff protest. Mr. Patterson, according to report, frankly admitted that the contract had been pushed through the War Department's procurement division without his knowledge. He agreed that Mr. Hillman and organized labor had a just grievance, and promised that no similar anti-labor contract would be approved in the future. Secretary Knox's attitude toward unionism is less certain. However, if Messrs. Knudsen and Patterson will work with Mr. Hillman, the frequently anti-labor bias of the old National Defense Advisory Commission will be a thing of the past.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Apropos of The New Republic's proposal last fortnight for economic coöperation between America and England, Washington experts point out that techniques for such joint action could readily be borrowed from existing international cartels. The great International Tin Committee, for example, is at least nominally a body for economic coöperation among the United States, England and Belgium under governmental control. By virtue of the Webb-Pomerene act, many American industries have belonged to worldwide trusts, usually under the State Department's mild and unofficial supervision. Perhaps the most recent review of the high degree of organization in international trade—up to the outbreak of war—was the testimony last winter before the Temporary National Economic Committee of Dr. Theodore J. Kreps. Dr. Kreps, later the TNEC's director, cited illustrations from fifty-nine industries, including rails, potash, aluminum, dyes, electric-light bulbs and rayon. While these cartels would furnish valuable experience in the detailed carrying-out of an Anglo-American program of coöperation, they were, of course, managed by business men for business profits; The New Republic's proposals would require a wholly different spirit.

Washington T. R. B.

Resurrection without Life

"Hudson's Bay" is another epic from the pages of history that ends up with no epic quality, two or three dates that cannot be controverted, and little enough of interest. This time we are in on the opening up of the Hudson's Bay fur-trading business, or at least the part played in it by the Canuck trapper, hunter and guide, Radisson. Getting no coöperation from either the French or English colonial governors, he went, so they say, to the King of England, who gave unofficial sanction to the first company. There has been meanwhile some talk of the forest primeval and the rich places created as all know by *le bon Dieu*, some business of paddling and portaging into the wilderness and trading with the Indians. But there has been too little of this and too much moonshining around with the soul of John Sutton, an exiled English lord who is supposed to be finding himself but could very well have done with a flashlight. Naturally he is in love with a bit of fluff back home, so we take him back home, where the lovely has a brother who is a fop but decides to find himself too.

With all this machinery creaking into motion we pretty well lose sight of the noble red man and the noble beaver. The first Hudson's Bay post is established (the film has no time for how they got a ship in through those treacherous reaches to the north) and fabulous wealth is at hand; but by that time the two English fancies are turning out to be more bounders than a pogo meet. Back to England, where everybody almost hangs, but not quite.

Paul Muni is not just the man for the character of Radisson; he has dignity and command but throws most of it away in popping his eyes and chewing on a French accent —as a trapper he would have scared every fur-bearing animal within ten days' march. Baird Cregar as the big-hearted wild man of the piece and Vincent Price as King Charles were the ones who came off best; the other foremost people were apron-strung by a script that missed the story by making up its own. Radisson is called a rogue and haloed like a saint; the Englishman is called a good fellow and made a heel; most of the red men were lost without a cigar store to stand in front of, and the great virgin Northwest took a lacing every time the plot rounded a corner. There is still sweep to parts of it, and some good rough-and-tumble, some nice quirks of humor in character. But if the picture doesn't care about the dramatic material in front of it, why should you?

It never rains but you get all wet. "Santa Fe Trail" has roughly the same idea as "Hudson's Bay" in going back to dramatic incidents in the development of this continent; the same kindergarten history; the same frosting of the romantic-ridiculous. It is probably more unfortunate in having Errol Flynn to be the young West Pointer who rises to military honors largely by appearing in front of the young lady and mooing woo. But it is less a burlesque of men and motives in that it has to do with the story of John Brown, who is not the picture's hero or quite its villain, and who is therefore allowed the indulgence of a little straight talk.

We start with Brown at the height of his early activities in Kansas and follow him—in the occasional lulls between military balls—to Harpers Ferry and the gallows. The main issues are not clear, but the man is shown as a fanatic and the hammer of God, and some sense of the time's confusion comes through. Raymond Massey gives a measure of dignity to the part and finds possibilities in it that others would have missed. But even if the character had been written into dramatic truth at the center of the picture, I'm afraid those India-rubber eyes and that tendency in enunciation to make like spelling out I. J. Fox Fine Furs in a force-3 breeze would still have got him in the end, and John Brown would still lie a-moldering. The film has some good characters in small parts, even though they are mocked by careless usage; and the one convincing near-principal is Van Heflin as the general focus of villainy.

These pictures of early turbulence are actually getting so slipshod that even their wild-west hoorah makes no sense. Thirty sharpshooters at thirty paces fire thirty rounds into Errol Flynn without spoiling the crease in his trousers (can it be they aren't *trying*—good God!); yet any pretty boy fresh from Senior Year can take a snapshot with an 1860 pistol from a galloping horse over rough country and bring down stone dead anything up to a more expensive character actor at 200 yards. Seasoned guerillas, planning a raid in their home country and in numbers of three-to-one, are routed by a charge in column of four and can't think of anything to do but gallop off and tell the wagons carrying their prize munitions to hurry up a little. Every pistol in a high-spot sequence fires thirty without a reload, but in a defeat scene will shoot two wide misses and then go click. Men besieged in an arsenal use revolvers at long range, rifles for close combat and, wading through piles of looted guns and ammunition all the time, get a click out of old Deerslayer and throw the whole gun at somebody as a last resort. The bare tumult of action for its own sake, so thoroughly learned and developed by the movies, is now walked through with a sort of idiot's sublime trust in the long firearm of coincidence.

This attitude of unconcern in the midst of incompetence

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is not awful merely because someone thinks it so. It is a picture of the zany-roost, funny and saddening. There they have millions of dollars of technical investment ready to go to work, the greatest craftsmen with their equipment, the highest-paid actors and directors and writers, the infinite engineers. It calls for a bucket of blood, so they send out for bona-fide donors; they get the blood by the washtubful just in case, and they bring it in in a paper bag.

If you have already seen "Northwest Mounted Police" around the neighborhood, this is mostly my fault, or your fault, but partly because the program includes the names of Gary Cooper, Akim Tamiroff and Lynn Overman—which are good names, in a firm, proud hand. But these boys, like everybody else in this spill of splendor, don't get more than close enough to throw The Evening Gazette against the back door of history. Any more than reference to history's street address would be hard to find here, as the story winds tighter and tighter in snarls of five lovers, Mounted Police, a Texas Ranger, half-breeds.

Cecil B. De Mille made it completely in technicolor, and that should be enough or too much. If you think this accredited master of the million-dollar pinwheel could direct traffic, let alone add to the hard-won art of pictures by so much as one stretch of the imagination, this two hours of color, killing, kindness and magnificent country may be your dish. If you have at any time in your life been more impressed by apartment-house doormen than by Preston Foster as inscriber of pioneer history, commander of men, you will hardly go for it. As a whole, the picture is devastating in its proof that even the tough established past can be as barren a land for the story of men and their real work and women, their indomitable brief victory over oblivion, as the pastry futuramas of any H. G. Wells.

OTIS FERGUSON

Stefan Wolpe's Music

SOMETHING ought speedily be done to distinguish Stefan Wolpe's place among the younger composers recently domiciled in the United States. It is really important, this position: his is a music new in point of form and expressivity, intricate but grandly standing up to the intolerable hardness and coldness of the present world. Actually, however, his place is obscure. Unlike members of his post-World War generation such as Hindemith, Milhaud and Krenek, Wolpe arrived on these shores unheralded by a great European reputation. Since then he has been lost in the shuffle of lesser people dropped down by chance amid a public confused and even disaffected by the mass influx. The very eminence of his gifts may have helped obscure him: save to climbers on the mountainside, few individuals are less conspicuous than those beginning to approach the summit—and it is among the living handful who are organizing their music on very high levels that Stefan Wolpe is to be found.

While the run of musicians may not even have heard of him, Aaron Copland can be counted among the great admirers of his music. A somewhat patronizing article on Wolpe in a recent issue of Modern Music—by Marion Bauer—meanwhile foreshadows the coming awareness.

He was born, this arresting personage, of a Russian father and a Hungarian mother, neither of whom was musical, at Berlin in 1902. Before his fifteenth year he had composed an entire opera, an octet for winds, numerous piano pieces. During the Armistice year he left his home to join one of the groups of youthful "painters, poets, philosophers" who at the period were wandering about Germany. While working as an errand-boy, a gardener and an opera-supe he continued composing, sometimes in railway stations, on staircases, at street corners. Studies which Wolpe had begun at the Berlin Academy under Taubmann and Juon, however, were continued under Schrecker, under Webern in Vienna and Scherchen in Brussels. About 1927, with Krenek and Weill, he participated in the German jazz movement, composing "shorts" for actors, singers and jazz orchestra; about 1932, in the popular movement, for whose sake he aimed at simple work-day music. Hitler's advent drove him to Russia, to Rumania, at length to Palestine. There he remained five years: there, under the impulsion of the Arabian and Jewish folksong, which fascinated him, his true feeling commenced releasing itself in concrete patterns. Wolpe's characteristic experiments with musical form, to the end of creating images of movement in suspense, may date from 1924. His peculiarly trenchant and vehement lyricism may have been couched by him in certain choruses written for Berlin work-people. None the less, it was in such compositions of the Palestinian period as the Song of Songs for alto, piano and instrumental obbligati, and the Four Songs after the Prophet Micah, that his impetus became passion: here fully we encounter his exuberantly vital, personal, in instances bitter and in others fanatical, moods and style and voice.

Not that his experience with the Semitic folksong transformed Wolpe into a folklore-composer. His exploitation of Yemenite, Arab and Palestinian material has confined itself to simple arrangements for piano, voice or chorus. The slightly Oriental folksong-like theme of one of the compositions of this period of his career, the little Sonata for Oboe and Piano, is a relic of the jazz movement, its preference for the popular and appreciation of the commonplace.

Two years ago Wolpe came to America and has been teaching both at the Settlement School in Philadelphia and privately. Last season he and his lady performed his March and Variations for Two Pianos at a concert of the League of Composers. Neither this impressive early piece (1931) nor the exciting songs on Biblical texts, however, forms the principal motive of the present notice, which is concerned with more recent of his compositions, such as the tonal Dance in the shape of a Chaconne and the four pieces in twelve-tone series—Allegro Mobile, Adagio, Passacaglia and Presto Furioso—that exist in piano, two-piano and orchestral versions. These recent works constitute pictures of movement as continuous, thorough and speedy as any known to music. They are of the spit and in the image of the contemporary mind, upshots of its delight in ongoing, intensifying concentration and sense of the revelation of absolute being in the world of becoming.

Their form is progressive, entirely developmental, a logical extension of the scheme of the cyclic variation initiated by Beethoven in the Finale of the Eroica and the C-minor Pianoforte Variations; advanced by Brahms;

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

classically illustrated by the "Variations Symphoniques" of César Franck. With these masters, the form of the variation no longer was built of thematic alterations, each one of which in the old fashion originated solely from the theme and merely redisguised and added fresh touches of interest to it. These men built their characteristic variation forms out of alterations which not only individually changed the shape, state and quality of the original theme but simultaneously to some degree varied and bore forward the preceding alterations. Wolpe's formal innovations merely embody more thoroughgoing, rapid and complicated instances of this process of continuous thematic and melodic progression.

In no case is even the theme of any of these recent pieces of his ever static or complete. It is always leisurely but steadily in transit. The melodic contour of the Chaconne's theme, to be sure, does establish itself toward the conclusion of the first of the composition's three parts. Still, it does so in connection with merely embryonic forms of its counterpoints. While they develop, the idea, as in the other pieces, restlessly matures or ages, presents itself in fresh attitudes, progressively grows skeletal, ultimately is reduced to its utmost possible simplicity. Expansions of intervals; rhythmic changes; that form of canon whose name recalls Havelock Ellis—it is "the inversion of the crab"—figure among the processes of development. Applied on a grand scale in the Passacaglia, the neo-cyclic methods of actuating form through ever new homogeneous events, by periodic introductions of synthetic alloys of preceding elements, and continuous, slow but incessantly denser and speedier intermixtures of the entire material, there build up a monumental, a cathedral-like edifice.

The process of thematic and melodic evolution meanwhile is seconded in all the pieces in twelve-tone series by underpinning progressions of scales which proceed in their intervallic order.—Let it, however, not be presumed that this massy, uninterruptedly kinetic form of Wolpe's is a formula, or realized in a mechanical fashion! No more than Cézanne—after *his* discovery that nature's shapes conform to cylinders, spheres and cones—sat down deliberately to paint cylinders, spheres, cones, has Wolpe applied the schemes evolved by him under the pressure of necessity to the solution of his problems. His form is concealed. It may be the bones of his compositions. Still he has breathed on these bones, subordinated them to or coördinated them with the inventive, feeling, creative process, sheathing them in the verdure and atmosphere of emotion.

His rhythms are born of the spirit of the dance: his new music may be likened to a dancing philosophy. Typical climaxes and ecstasies flow from the very incessant concentration. Finely drawn, much of the detail of his complex, aerial edifices of oftentimes hammered, stony sonorities and austere, structural lines, has poetry and beauty. Above all, this so highly organized work has mood and lyricism: strong moods and expressivities the antitheses of Schoenberg's overrefined ones. It sings, delicately sometimes, oftener with fierceness, and in instances with the fanaticism of the desert: invariably with exuberance, tensity, a breath of the excessive. It utters both the feeling of the intolerable hardness and coldness of the world and finds accents of an ecstasy that entirely surmounts them.

PAUL ROSENFELD

The Bandwagon

8 a. m., WJSV and WOL—King George VI, child evacués, fathers and brothers on war duty; seamen of the Royal Navy, members of the Polish Air Force, the Czech Army, Dominion Troops, all participate in an empirical observance of Christmas Under Fire. – *Radio program in The Washington, D. C., Post.*

New England Skiing Poor Unless Snow Falls. – *Headline in The Hartford Times.*

Foreign sources spoke of poison gas [in Badoglio's 1936 campaign in Ethiopia], but your correspondent can aver that it was used sparsely for experimental purposes only, or to break up concentrations not desired by the Italians. – *Dispatch from John T. Whitaker from Rome to The New York Post.*

Coming Soon
Watch for Dates!
"Brigham Young"
"All This and Heaven Too."
– *From an advertisement in The Washington, Pennsylvania, Observer.*

Columbia University Press hears that current best sellers in Germany are Dale Carnegie's "How to Win Friends and Influence People" and Walter B. Pitkin's "Life Begins at Forty." – *News item in The New York Times.*

Boy, If They Ever Get Mad!

In a broadcast heard here [New York], the Italian announcer said:

There is one thing that British propaganda fails to take into account, and that is the peculiar temper of the Italians.

The Italian is a light-hearted and easygoing fellow until he is aroused.

Sometimes what he needs is just a little slap, then he stands up and fights to a finish, and the more blows the more dangerous he becomes. – *AP dispatch printed in The Des Moines Register.*

Who Was That Gun I Seen You With?

They [German sources] said that the arrival of German war equipment in Italian ports should not be misconstrued as German troop movements, even if the equipment was accompanied by uniformed Germans. – *News story from Belgrade, Yugoslavia, printed in The New York Times.*

Every Man a King

A capitalist is any sort of person with funds for investment. Mechanic "Slim" Jones with $200 to invest is no less a capitalist than a Rockefeller. The only difference is that Jones is a small capitalist. – *From "The Future of Investment Trusts," by Floyd B. Odlum, printed in The Financial World.*

Love-in-Hollywood Department

I was interested today when Dolores Del Rio filed suit for divorce against her husband Cedric Gibbons, the famed art director. For a long time Dolores fought against a divorce, for such a step meant more to her than to most girls, but she is openly and frankly in love with Orson Welles and he with her. I suppose she felt she could not be seen with Orson and still remain married. – *Louella Parsons in The New York Journal.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Correspondence

Airmail from Inside China

SIR: For the last few months our fortunes have constantly been affected by the war in Europe, and to some extent also by actions and inactions of America. The surrender of Pétain to Hitler and of Indo-China to Japan brought the enemy right at our back door. At one time it looked as if Japan would force open that door. She did not do so mainly because a large part of her armed forces would have to be tied up. It was not difficult for the Axis to convince her that a less costly and more profitable enterprise would be to attack Malaya and the Dutch East Indies instead.

Japan joined the Axis on September 27. From all appearances she has been preparing the southward move ever since. The reduction of her garrisons in South China, the concentration of a large expeditionary force, many transport ships and air and naval units on and around the island of Hainan, and finally her attempt to maneuver Thailand into line—these all indicate that Japan is making herself ready for the expected adventure.

The adventure must involve a trial of naval strength with both England and America. The latter may not come in, but Japan has poor reason to ignore the possibility. My own information regarding the attitude of Japanese naval leaders differs diametrically. According to one source of information, it was the naval leaders themselves who took the initiative in insisting upon a policy of southward expansion. According to another, the prevalent naval opinion in Japan is still for caution. How soon Japan will attack Singapore or the Dutch East Indies depends on which source of information is correct. But attack she eventually must; for she bears the uncomfortable burden of a mighty power and has her pledges to Hitler and Mussolini to redeem. I think it is already too late for America to dissuade Japan by a show of force, though not too late to gain a decisive early victory by swift action.

There is much wishful thinking about our marching into Indo-China. Some even affirm that preparations have already been made. The closer relationship between England and America and between England and China undoubtedly presages a move, such as a southward thrust by China to relieve the pressure of Japan on Singapore.

The Burma Road has been operating again for more than a month. As soon as the decision to reopen the road was known, Japan intensified her aerial activities all over this province (Yunnan). One of the two main bridges on the Burma Road was damaged, but communication was never completely suspended, and the repairs did not take long.

The bombing of Kunming is like a wolf attacking a flock of sheep. The city is, aside from a few anti-aircraft guns, without any defense. Our own planes are too few and too slow to risk encounter with those of the enemy. The dugouts are poor. Few would dare entrust their lives to these muddy and watery things. When there are air-raid alarms, the whole city, of course not including the police and firemen, has to seek shelter in the open fields, on hilltops and canal banks. Bombing frequently lasts from five to nine hours. As Kunming is a city of some 200,000, and as those who have accommodations in the country number only two out of ten, it is easy to imagine the havoc that air raids can work on the populace. Yet in spite of the havoc, work, both government and private, is still being done.

Though one of our five colleges had been reduced to ruins and the houses of some thirty faculty and staff members also destroyed, we are, by shifting our classes and office hours to early mornings and late afternoons, still attending to our work.

Our latest concern is neither the intensity of aerial raids nor the inadequacy of aircraft and other imported war materials. It is the peace offensive. Not that we will succumb to it, but we fear that the Soviets might be a party to it. Since October, when Japan began to withdraw from Southern Kwangsi, there seem to have been troop reductions everywhere. The Japanese broadcasting stations continue to fill the air with reports of such withdrawals and of the arrangements for peace. Our government would of course entertain no such proposals. But the development of the Moscow-Tokyo negotiations in general, and the Soviet attitude toward the Japanese peace maneuvering in particular, have made us apprehensive.

What do we expect of America in the way of help at this juncture? At no time since the war began has there been more agreement. All Chinese believe that we need only loans and materials, to come in through the Burma Road. We need plenty of them, but nothing else. This general agreement is possible because we are now assured that appeasement on the part of the democracies is now out of the question, and military conquest of China by Japan equally so.

Kunming, China TUAN-SHENG CHIEN

Spotlight on Civil Service

SIR: Those concerned with efficient public administration through Civil Service, and those concerned with greater competitive job opportunities because of an expanded Civil Service, would do well to watch the progress of the Ramspeck Act, recently signed by President Roosevelt. This is permissive legislation authorizing the President to bring under the merit system at least 125,000 of the 300,000 federal jobs still filled by patronage. Under its terms, incumbents must pass qualifying examinations to stay on the job. Experts predict that 28 percent will fail, which means that 35,000 jobs will be vacant six months after the tests are held. Note especially that:

1. President Roosevelt has full say as to just which jobs—if any—shall come under Civil Service.

2. The United States Civil Service Commission is already overworked finding people for the defense agencies, and will need much extra help and money to do the job the act authorizes.

3. By refusing to allocate funds for the qualifying examinations Congress can effectively stymie the act.

4. The act gives an agency head the authority to recommend which employees be brought under Civil Service, once the President issues an order that the particular agency come in. An employee can be left out because of personal prejudice.

5. Action now awaits the report of the Reed Committee, which is studying the entire federal Civil Service set-up. This committee, curiously enough, remains silent, although it had previously announced that it was merely waiting for passage of the Ramspeck bill.

New York City MORTON YARMON

Michigan, Ford's Football

SIR: At the University of Michigan students are dismissed without a hearing on will of the university administration. The campus newspaper is gagged by a subtle censorship. The American Student Union, the only progressive organization on the campus, is suspended. Students' scholarships are revoked when

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

students (specifically Miss Margaret Campbell, secretary of the ASU) "bite the hand that feeds them."

It must be remembered that the university is not a free agent. The Michigan legislature will convene on January 2, and, among other things, it will discuss the appropriation for the university for the next two years. It is possible that an unfair share of the blame for fascist conditions at Michigan has been put on President Ruthven. He is, as he was once quoted as saying, just a "chore boy" for the Regents, the legislature and the people of the state. Mr. Ruthven has to have the state appropriation to run the university. Numerous people on the campus are anxious to take the blame from his shoulders and place it where it belongs: on the legislature and on the interests which control the legislature. That the Ford Motor Company is one of these is a commonplace. It is said here that Regent Harry Kipke, who was practically elected by Harry Bennett, the Ford "personnel" director, presented Mr. Ruthven with an astounding list of one hundred persons he wanted expelled from the university last spring.

ROBERT COPP

Ann Arbor, Mich.

The New Republic's Poetry

SIR: Possible answers to lack of violent reactions to your poetry: 1. Few read it. 2. Those who don't like it think something is wrong with them. 3. Some, like me, like most of it and say nothing.

Must say, though, I still don't know what Auden's "quest" is: where he has been, where he is going, and why, and what of it.

A man should have as much freedom in writing, reading and liking poetry as he has in liquor and love—saving the somewhat greater import of the latter two to the public weal.

Your poetry is much better than your critiques of it. Good poets are usually bad critics of poetry—especially their own; bad poets almost always are; and all critics are a Jehovah-complex crew. Item: Young Jarrell, the atrabiliar. (*Cf.* "Poets: Old, New and Aging," The New Republic, December 9.)

Oxford, O. READ BAIN

[After the letters we have received about Mr. Jarrell's review, which are divided fairly evenly between those which applaud (vigorously) and those which dispraise (viciously), we withdrew completely our earlier remarks about the deplorable calmness of New Republic readers when face to face with poetry.—THE EDITORS]

In Defense of Allan Nevins

SIR: In The New Republic, December 9, Louis Galantière reviewed Allan Nevins' life of Rockefeller in what is, in my opinion, an unfair and inaccurate manner. Mr. Nevins is criticized for not being a psychologist (which he does not pretend to be and which would scarcely contribute to a more scholarly biography) and for not having any point of view "except the resolve to be fair, and no acquaintance with political economy."

A careful reading of the book indicates that considerable space is given, and in a thoroughly scholarly fashion, to the economics of the industry. The author has succeeded admirably in placing Rockefeller and the Standard Oil in the economic and social milieu of their time. On every page there are indications of the most painstaking research.

I can understand a criticism alleging that Mr. Nevins has occasionally "pulled his punches" and that, in various places, he has given Rockefeller the benefit of the doubt. But it is utterly beyond me how a reviewer who has gone over the book carefully can say that Mr. Nevins "was not adequately equipped" for the task he undertook. I would rate this book as on a par with the very best of biographies of business men and I regard it as a major contribution to the history of American economic life.

New York City EMANUEL STEIN

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Joseph Z. Schoeneman, of Chicago, takes issue with the proposal for Senators-at-large made in a letter by Ralph W. Nelson (December 16). "If Mr. Nelson had suggested the abolition of the Senate in its entirety, I would agree with him," says Mr. Schoeneman, in a spectacularly large way, "but his plan contains a major fallacy. Senators-at-large, elected irrespective of state lines, would result in unequal distribution of representation. Areas with a larger population would be favored. Sections like the far Middle West would have to accept what the East gave them. The result would be men in Washington unfamiliar with local problems." (Mr. Nelson's idea was that there might well be more men in Washington whose first concern was national problems. He suggested an amendment limiting the states to one Senator each and providing for an equal number of Senators-at-large.)

Is Otto Strasser in Bermuda, on the way to the United States? Aerol Arnold, of Chicago, has heard that he is and hopes that the report is wrong. Mr. Arnold points out that Strasser is a Nazi and an enemy of democracy, that the battle between Hitler and himself is an internal struggle for power, not a clash in ideas; and he asks for a sharp "No" from the State Department if the matter of a Strasser visa should come up.

At work on a book to be called "Sacred Cows in Newspaper Offices" (title with apologies to George Seldes), Whidden Graham, 611 West 111th Street, New York City, asks New Republic readers if they can give him a tip as to when the phrase "sacred cow" began to be applied, in newspaper offices, to subjects that could not be mentioned for fear of offending advertisers. His impression is that John Swinton, at one time managing editor of The New York Sun, or Arthur McEwen, San Francisco journalist, first used the term in this connection. Our guess is that it drifted into a thousand newspaper offices with the same inevitability with which the roaches used to come through the cracks in the washroom walls. Does any newspaperman know?

Item you may have missed in the early November excitement: The statehood plebiscite in Hawaii came out 46,174 in favor of statehood for the territory, 22,428 against, or more than two to one. John Snell, executive secretary of the Hawaii Equal Rights Commission, who sent us the official figures, praised Vera M. Thompson's letter "Hold on to Hawaii" (The New Republic, November 11) as "fair, correct and impartial." He hopes that it dispelled some of the "ignorance and misunderstanding" about Hawaii that exists on the mainland of the United States.

Item you mustn't forget about: One of the most unreasonable prosecutions ever to take place under the criminal-syndicalism law and one of the most shocking miscarriages of justice in America in recent years was the conviction of Robert Wood, state secretary of the Communist Party in Oklahoma, for selling books, and the conviction of Alan Shaw, twenty-two-year-old City Secretary. Brutal sentences of ten years in the penitentiary and $5,000 fines were imposed. Other defendants are awaiting trial. Appeals must be made. Checks should be sent to Miss Nena Beth Stapp, executive secretary, Oklahoma Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, 600 Savings Building, Oklahoma City.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books in Review

Procrustes and the Poets

THIS BOOK has great merit but it is not, I think, so good as Mr. Daiches' recent "The Novel and the Modern World." While the criticism of fiction still faces the insuperable difficulties described by Percy Lubbock in "The Craft of Fiction" twenty years ago, the problem of the novel lacks a dimension of difficulty that the critic of poetry may never lose sight of. That difficulty is the intricate use of language as symbolism. I am not saying that the critic of the novel needs no unusual powers, but only that novels—even novels by Mrs. Woolf—are action, and action may succeed well enough without benefit of the ultimate effects of language. Language for action and language for symbolism are not, of course, generically different, but they tend toward great divergence. The symbolic use of language demands of the critic not only unusual intelligence but very special powers of reading.

The merits of this book help to define its limitations: Mr. Daiches is not so good a reader of poetry as of novels. He is better at backgrounds, influences, forces than he is at the poetic text; but we must be grateful that he has given us the first studied survey of British poetry from the late Victorians to the present, to Auden and Spender. His general test of the value of modern poets is social "relevance" and social "truths"—not Truth, as he explicitly warns us; it ought to be said at once that he offers us none of the fanatical crudities of the extreme Marxists of the last decade; though Mr. Daiches himself is in some general sense a Marxist. There is even evidence in this book that he still enjoys the advantages of a classical education: there is present here at any rate a detachment which some of the English Marxists achieved in their understanding of political ideas and which gave to their literary criticism a maturity of judgment not conspicuous in most of their American contemporaries: a refusal to take up intellectually suicidal "positions," from which, since they could not move, they could not grow.

There are many literary judgments in this book which expose the limitations of any sort of doctrine of relevance, however intelligently it may be used. I will cite only three of them. "It is Yeats's structural ability," says Mr. Daiches, "and his superb gift of phrase which enable him to transform private mutterings into great poetry." But according to Mr. Daiches' general theory, private mutterings cannot be great poetry; the mutterings must have relevance. If they are great poetry, are they still private mutterings even though they may lack Mr. Daiches' kind of relevance? Mr. Daiches is perplexed by what he calls Yeats's "fantastic philosophy," which he cannot accept, because it is not "relevant." There has always been in the Marxist, and even in the more general sociological, criticism of literature, a concealed neo-classicism: the doctrine that the poet begins with sound and acceptable ideas and dresses them up with a "superb gift of phrase." But Mr. Daiches is properly overwhelmed by Yeats's genius and power; he cannot dismiss him; yet he is puzzled because the poetry cannot be distinguished from ideas that he finds nonsensical, even "crazy." Again, Mr. Daiches is strongly inclined to dismiss from the Eliot canon everything since "The Hollow Men"—everything, that is to say, since the religious phase which begins with "Ash Wednesday." Since that phase began, Eliot has lost everything except his powers of "organization." Mr. Daiches simply does not like, does not see as "relevant," what Eliot has been using those powers to organize. There is here something like a willful stultification of the sensibility on the part of a critic who can, outside the circle of his prejudices, be both sensitive and astute. Yet, on the whole, this general intelligence serves Mr. Daiches well until he comes to C. Day Lewis, toward the end of the book: the chapter on Day Lewis can be described only as a critical collapse. He takes seriously a third-rate poet, because the verse points to "ideas" that Mr. Daiches likes.

There is Yeats, with his "fantastic philosophy" and his great poetry. There is Day Lewis with his—to Mr. Daiches—sound philosophy and his bad poetry. This predicament indicates, I believe, the direction one must take to find the chief problem of criticism. If Mr. Daiches cannot deal with it in terms of his method, should he not try to get a new one?

I think it is possible to discern the point at which Mr. Daiches slides off this problem. We watch him while, like a detective hero, he absently picks up the clue, then lays it down and moves on. The clue is the problem of "multiple belief." His discussion of this problem and his frequent references to it represent the nearest approach to subtlety in Mr. Daiches' reading of the modern poets. (I should like to see acknowledgments to Cleanth Brooks, Empson, Ransom and Blackmur, who do this sort of thing still better.) Mr. Daiches' contribution to our understanding of multiple belief, or of "ambivalent attitudes," consists in a simplified framework of historical reference. "There are thus," he says, "three groups—those who met the problem by limitation of the existing tradition, those who met it by going back to an older, long abandoned tradition, and those who tried to create a new tradition." It is an illuminating scheme: in the first group, the Imagists; in the second, Eliot; in the third, Auden and, surprisingly, Yeats—because he must go in somewhere. Yet in every sense but that of "style," in the later poems, Yeats went back to an older tradition. Perhaps Mr. Daiches fails to identify it because he cannot find it in an historical period.

The joker is the word tradition. What is it? Mr. Daiches seems to assume that in the first group it is merely literary; in the second, literary and religious; in the third, literary, political and social. In the qualities of the third group, we see the outlines of the new and complete tradition. To what extent do the modern poets fit into this framework? To a very slight extent, if we ascribe to it a real objective validity, if we make it more than the tool of a provisional insight. Yeats's obstinate refusal to fit in ought

[1] Poetry and the Modern World: A Study of Poetry in England between 1900 and 1939, by David Daiches. The University of Chicago Press. 247 pages. $2.50.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to warn us that the critical value of Mr. Daiches' three groups is seriously impaired if we look upon them as exclusive possibilities of poetic sensibility. And by that phrase I mean a restraining formula outside us, something ascertainable in the historical process apart from the poetry.

Mr. Daiches is aware of the danger without being quite free from it. It seems to me quite plain that he pushes an illuminating insight beyond its true use, to the point where it becomes a dogmatic injunction on the poets to heed the demands of "relevance." There is the tendency to force the complex poetic language into simple correspondence with social and historical ideas that Mr. Daiches fixes in advance: he seems to know better than the poets what they should have done about his three attitudes toward "tradition." It is this external view, I believe, that keeps him from making as much of the problem of "multiple beliefs" as he might otherwise have done; and to have made more of that problem might have led him to a quite different conclusion—that his framework ought to fit the poets, not the poets the framework, that the history must prove itself in the poetry, not the poetry in the history. He misses the multiple effects of a difficult historical situation in the poets themselves. In calling this "situation" historical, we are confessing that its reality is inchoate rather than formed: all that we know about it we know through the poetry, for it is there that it enjoys the only reality that we can experience. By trying to fit the poets into his groups, he sets up as the test of their value, not some standard taken from the poetry, but the degree of their conformity to an external reference which exists only on the personal authority of Mr. Daiches' assertion. He remarks that Eliot in "The Waste Land" tried "to solve the cultural problem of his time." Would it not be more within the range of what we actually know to assume that Eliot was trying to write as good a poem as he could, with materials that interested him? What were these materials? Was the cultural problem of our time already in them? I doubt it. If there is a cultural problem in what "The Waste Land" actually says, did not the poem rather create the problem than solve it? In what sense does poetry solve problems?

It is a question that I do not propose to answer; yet I think we may justly feel that Mr. Daiches is asking for an answer that neither he nor anyone else is going to get. He is asking the modern poets to assent to his hope of a special solution to the social and political problem—which is likely to be another sort of problem altogether, more difficult than sociology and politics. (He seems to feel that the chief problem of our time, whatever it is, raises the moral question only when certain poets, perhaps Eliot and Yeats, refuse to see it socially and politically; that is, such poets tend to be irresponsible, their ideas tend to "irrelevance.") What Mr. Daiches' own solution is cannot detain us; it is, in fact, not explicitly stated in this book; it exists as an assumed body of ideas to which reference can be conveniently made. In literary criticism Mr. Daiches' point of view issues in the doctrine of relevance. When Mr. Daiches asks whether a poet or a poem is "relevant," may we not return the question: Relevant to what? The strict answer must be: relevant to his analysis of the "historical situation," relevant to what he would like to see the poets do—not necessarily to what they have done. The general point of view of this book, then, is some kind of social and political determinism, or perhaps a "cultural" determinism, of the arts; the broader term indicates Mr. Daiches' genuine awareness of the complexities of the critical problem.

Although he is a good reader of poetry, quite good enough to be frankly baffled by the failure of the poets to make up their minds, he does not in the long run like poetry; for there is, throughout his book, an exasperation at the multiplicity of belief and attitude that the poets appear to be unwilling or unable to simplify. Multiple belief points for Mr. Daiches to the external complexities of the social *milieu*—complexities outside the poetry. So the background, the situation in which the poet finds himself, is the objective material for study; the poetry, merely the subjective pointer toward the external situation. "Poetry and the Modern World" is an excellent historical essay from a school of critics who have dominated poetic criticism since the First World War. But there is a question that I believe this school should begin to ask: does not the doctrine of relevance tend to dissolve poetry and the other arts in the flux of history? To which, then, to the poetry or to the critic's historical picture, are we to give the greater authority? Mr. Daiches as critic uses with great competence a method that betrays him, as it betrays its other adherents, into the assumption of an omniscience to which he would surely not lay claim as a man.

ALLEN TATE

The Eye at the Keyhole

Gossip: The Life and Times of Walter Winchell, by St. Clair McKelway. New York: The Viking Press. 150 pages. $1.75.

THIS IS the first attempt at a full-length portrait, in loving and conscientious detail, of the Master. Other well meaning biographers and analysts have tried their hands at sketchy miniatures, but none of them was notably successful. It is too easy, tackling a job of such fearful magnitude, to become bogged down either in a sneaking admiration or a deep and paralyzing disgust, or a little of both. Not that the Wonder Man is a baffling or particularly complex character; it is merely that, when one tries to pin him down, he has something of the elusiveness of a water-bug. Mr. McKelway, an able journalist with a sense of proportion, has done a thoughtful study, and an honorable one.

The material in this little book is virtually identical with Mr. McKelway's six-part "Profile" of the Colossus which first appeared in The New Yorker, and which caused schisms and reverberations from which, unhappily, Café Society is still suffering. In addition, it caused the notoriously thin-skinned hero to thresh about, crying "Foul!" and vowing horrible revenge (one form of this revenge, by the way, was the barring of Mr. Harold Ross, editor of The New Yorker, from the Stork Club, which, in some circles, is a punishment comparable only to the Chinese water torture or the bastinado).

To be sure, there are certain minor inaccuracies, but they in no way weaken the essential validity of the McKelway portrait. Indeed, if the author had been so inclined, he could have dug much further, really "given that guy a dose of his own medicine," and gone on his way with a clear enough conscience. Instead, he chose to examine

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the subject with a certain judicial calm, to give enough of his life and personality to make him understandable, and to attempt to explain him as a phenomenon who, undoubtedly, has had a considerable influence upon modern journalism. The result is not exactly a pretty picture, but neither is it distorted or malicious in tone. It is, moreover, fundamentally unanswerable, notwithstanding whatever anguished mutterings the Big Fellow and his satraps may emit along Fifty-second Street.

Here is the story of an ex-hoofer, brash and unschooled, who became a tremendous success (as success commonly is measured) because of his frenzied energy, his unashamed push, and his really astonishing gift for writing an arresting line of patter. In the earlier years of his career he was encouraged by many persons who were attracted by his curious individuality and who, in some instances at least, really believed that he was what is known as a "nice fellow" and an improving influence on journalism. He was welcomed into the homes of Important People. From the highest sources he received items and suggestions. He retains some of these friendships; he has lost many others, who in puzzled dismay have turned from him because of his antics—antics which can only be described as wanton. The Master, in addition to suffering from a galloping persecution complex, also at times seems to have a contempt for what ordinarily passes for friendship.

And yet his influence as thinker, molder of public opinion, and whatever else he may be, probably is greater today than ever before. At any rate the number of newspapers that take his stuff constantly increases, and his radio popularity shows no signs of diminution.

In some quarters it is customary to credit the patriarch of the gossip-writers with a sense of ethics (an odd, homemade code, but a code, nevertheless), the ability to coin a word or turn a phrase for the lasting enrichment of the American language, and an almost uncanny degree of accuracy. Mr. McKelway effectively demolishes each of these claims. He shows that, both by definition and practice, gossip-writing is an irresponsible form of journalism —the dissemination of rumor, half-truth, suspicion, unverified reports and innuendo. The damage to individuals cannot, of course, be measured; the effect on journalism, Mr. McKelway believes, has been in the main bad. Whatever gains may have been made in liveliness and personal "warmth" have, he contends, been more than offset by the general debasement. This contention may be open to debate, but he makes out a convincing case.

This is a revealing and terrifying little book, but it is amusing too. The vaudevillian turned thinker, the Broadway character turned patriot and international adviser, the pal of gangsters turned cop-lover and confidant of G-Men, the jittery egoist who is so fearful for his personal safety that he carries two guns—here is one of the genuinely comic figures of our time.

Has he done more good than harm? Has he really been a potent influence, notwithstanding his raucous screamings and posturings, in arousing the United States to face certain grave perils, and is he therefore, in the end, a great public benefactor? It may well be. On this point Mr. McKelway has little to say. It is probably one of those judgments that had better be left in the lap of history.

STANLEY WALKER

Verse, Ecstatic and Knotted

In Plato's Garden: Poems 1928-39, by Lincoln Fitzell. Albuquerque, New Mexico: Alan Swallow. 97 pages. $1. Any Century, by Patti Broadhurst. New York: The Dial Press. 93 pages. $1.75.

NEITHER OF THESE BOOKS, I'm afraid, can be commended to any but the exceptionally curious reader. Of the eighty-five poems in Mr. Fitzell's collection, twenty-one are well versified; of Miss Broadhurst's sixty-four, there are perhaps thirteen that can be read with a straight face.

Criticism, however, must reckon with mediocrity and discriminate between its kinds. There is a wide diversity here. Mr. Fitzell, who lives in Berkeley, has evidently paid heed to the solid teachings of Yvor Winters and Howard Baker; his work is cast in a regular meter with no concessions to "expressive form," it is founded on intellectual structure, and it seeks strenuously to formulate moral values. But though he has presumably chosen his models for their rigor, Fitzell shows a very inadequate notion of what the rigor consists in. I think that if he were to consult again the masters of the rhymed, iambic quatrain, he would find a more exacting and illimitable art in that form than he gives it credit for.

Since poetry is an art, and first of all an art, it seldom rises above the level of its technical qualities. It is therefore of no avail to Fitzell's verse in general that its subjects are sincerely felt or seriously wrestled with, when his rhythms have all the subtlety of a falling dishpan and even his rhyming is poor. The specific characteristic of this verse is indeed its very glut of poverty, a conscientious habit, for instance, of loading every couplet with big, rugged, ill chosen words until it can hardly move. When, in so choked a context, and with his customary rhetorical innocence, he lets fall the moral or the apothegm in the final quatrain, the reader merely feels relief that that particular duty has been performed.

The criticism is worth making strongly because here and there Fitzell has written a line of true concision, and more rarely a poem equal to its pretensions. Most of the poems in this book argue into and away from Western settings: the desert, the Sierras, the coastal valleys. Of a dead Indian he writes: "Ants swarm the obstacle of brow," which is excellent; then goes on to an example of how to be portentously literary while syntactically careless: "Yet, fire tendrils of the dust, This forehead keeps an early rust. . . ." The best poems, the twenty-one that are well versified, are simple, pastoral pieces like "Gravestone," "Snow Burial," "Arena," "Country Air," "The Road to San Joaquin." The one from which the book takes its title is tolerable as a philosophical poem, though it scarcely describes the book.

Even at the risk of knotting up, like Mr. Fitzell, Miss Broadhurst might do well to emulate his efforts at austerity. Her burden is one of love and ecstasy. The jacket quotes Leo Wingshot of The Philadelphia Record as saying: "Edna St. Vincent Millay has it, Elinor Wylie has it, Witter Bynner has it, Patti Broadhurst has it." It is tempting, in a way, to leave it at that. Yet justice requires me to note that, untutored as she is in the disciplines of Mr. Winters and Mr. Baker, not only can Miss Broadhurst turn out

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lines like these: "I said today: I hope there is a God,/So may I, when I die, say to him/Simply, Thank you. . . ." She can also outstrip Mr. Fitzell and his exemplars in an embarrassing sort of authenticity:

> For three long years we three in bed
> Slept—husband, I, and she;
> And cramped and cold, I nearly died
> Till time accustomed me.
>
> At last she left; but I who then
> Was used to company,
> Refilled the place; now three in bed
> Sleep—husband, I, and he.

ROBERT FITZGERALD

Dean in Cloud-Cuckoo-Land

The Soviet Power, by Hewlett Johnson, Dean of Canterbury. New York: Modern Age Books. 368 pages. $2.50.

IN HIS "Stalin's Russia," Max Eastman has a brilliant chapter on the "Motive Patterns of Socialism," in which he divides socialists into three main groups: The rebels against tyranny and oppression, in whose motivation the concept of human freedom forms the axis; those yearning with a mixture of religious mysticism and animal gregariousness for human solidarity: the united-brotherhood pattern; those anxious above all for efficiency and intelligent organization: the passionate planners. The first group, as he points out, has been completely disillusioned by Stalin's Russia, which it now regards as counter-revolutionary. The Very Reverend Hewlett Johnson, however, clearly belongs to the second group. "To the Communist," he says, "as to the Christian, community is paramount." In his lust to merge himself in a totality, he can ignore the Soviet concentration camps, the purges and massacres of the followers of Lenin, the famines and the new form of serfdom for workers and peasants. In the name of socialist brotherhood, this group is ready to permit the same bloody deeds and oppression which made Christian brotherhood a curse to Europe in the era of the Religious Wars.

Dean Johnson is obviously too naïve and ignorant to know that he is propagating lies. His book is part imaginative wish-fulfilment and part faithful transcription of Soviet propaganda material. Like the Webbs, but more understandably, he has uncritically accepted everything he was told while touring in the USSR, never pausing to let the evidence of his senses contradict the paper plans, paper laws and paper achievements. But whereas one suspects that the Webbs would rather enjoy being Soviet bureaucrats, Dean Johnson's humanitarianism would be revolted if he ever came to know the truth. As a small but suggestive example of the Dean's exclusive reliance upon material supplied to him by the Soviet government, and of his general ignorance of social and economic literature, one can point to his citation from "the American economist Emery Brux." It is obvious from the context that he means Brooks Emeny, and as obvious that he is faithfully transcribing a translated passage from some Soviet publication.

Meeting only the aristocracy of the "socialist fatherland," he took their conditions of life to be general and ignored the silent masses. Sublimely confident that state ownership of the means of production and distribution equals the millennium, he proceeds to describe the society of his dreams, confident in his faith, sincere, credulous, and unmindful of reality.

Not once does this dean of the Church of England notice the beggars, the homeless children or the ragged peasants, nor compare the price of food and clothing with wages earned, nor inquire how much food the government leaves to the peasants for their own consumption. Instead, having imagined a society of abundance, social justice and loving kindness, he proceeds to describe it as if it actually existed. His account of the good life in Soviet Russia accordingly bears no more relation to the actualities of life under Stalin than More's Utopia bore to life in sixteenth-century England.

The falseness of the picture drawn by Hewlett Johnson is most glaringly obvious when he writes of Soviet agriculture. Although even the official Soviet figures reveal the fact that harvests are little if at all larger than in Tsarist times, and that *per-capita* production must be less, the author writes as if production had enormously increased. Any difficulty which the published figures might have created for him is surmounted by the simple expedient of picking out 1937—the one year in which the grain harvest was substantially larger than in 1913—and ignoring the years before and after. When this device does not suffice, he compares the *planned* figure for 1942 with the famine years in the early thirties.

Many statements in this book are just plain untruths, as when the author says that the price of bread fell more than a half from January, 1934, to January, 1937, and that there were similar decreases in the prices of other foods. In actual fact the price of bread doubled when it was derationed in 1935, and the prices of other foods were all greatly increased when the rationing system came to an end. He also makes other false statements, such as that "prices have steadily fallen and wages risen," and that "the total bulk of goods produced surpasses all other countries but the U. S. A." The truth of the matter is that the workers' wages in the USSR—even before the rise in prices and decrease in piece rates in 1940—have fallen so low under the Soviet government that the average daily wage in 1937 was worth only nine kilograms of black bread as against twenty-four under the Tsars. Expressed in terms of butter, the fall is from thirty-eight kilos to eleven and a half. "Nothing strikes the visitor to the Soviet Union more forcibly than the absence of fear," writes the Dean. He does not, of course, mention that there is no *habeas corpus* and that imprisonment without trial is the rule rather than the exception; that at a moderate estimate some six million persons have been sent to the concentration camps during the past ten years; that millions have died of starvation; that the worker who is ten minutes late on the job can be dismissed without appeal by the factory manager and at best has his wages severely cut for a month; that there is no unemployment pay in the Soviet Union nor any kind of relief for the workless and destitute; that children of twelve who steal food are subject to the death penalty. If this is the kind of security "socialism" gives to the workers, they would be well advised to fight for the preservation of the insecurity they enjoy under the capitalist system.

FREDA UTLEY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Italian-American Novelists

The Paesanos, by Jo Pagano. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 231 pages. $2.
Dago Red, by John Fante. New York: The Viking Press. 211 pages. $2.50.

IT WAS INEVITABLE that sooner or later an Italian-American literature would start blossoming in this country, once the children of Italian immigrants became old enough to articulate the strong contrast between their vivid home-life and the relatively dull existence of the non-Italians about them. Naturally enough, the authors of these novels, as well as a number of other writers who are drawing on their Italian background for material, are all in the neighborhood of thirty. The first lusty flower in this field of fiction was "Christ in Concrete," by Pietro Di Donato.

Both "Dago Red" and "The Paesanos" deal with Italian families living in this country. Both deal extensively with boisterous fathers who are inclined to ride roughshod over the sensibilities of their immediate family, particularly of their wives. The father in Fante's novel is a hardworking bricklayer, generous and always in debt; Pagano's is a retired merchant, who drives his wife frantic with his extravagances, and carries a silver-headed cane to show off his bank account. So far as their amazing capacity for drinking and living is concerned, they are unmistakably brothers.

If Fante's material seems thinner by comparison with Pagano's, it is because the former is more engrossed in his own personal conflicts and, also, perhaps, because he has fewer Italian relatives. But he is able to deal more fully and sensitively with some of the difficulties that children of Italians encounter in growing up among non-Italians. Although Pagano seems to have richer material, his stories lack the variety of mood and treatment of those in "Dago Red." The misadventures of his *paesanos* too often follow a set pattern, and their humor is sometimes a little slapstick; yet his writing has a wonderful freshness.

Both of these writers, with their sharp sense of reality and their winy kind of humor, are contributing something precious to American literature, even if that contribution can only be described as a mood. JERRE MANGIONE

Olives on the Apple Tree, by Guido D'Agostino. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 302 pages. $2.50.

GUIDO D'AGOSTINO is deeply concerned with the difficulties which present themselves to the foreign-born (in this case Italo-Americans) in their attempts to adjust themselves to the impersonal and often bewildering American way of life. The pity and rising sense of horror with which Americans have watched the tragic fate of minority groups in the totalitarian countries have often obscured the fact that the great American melting pot does not always function ideally, and that the Americanization of our immigrant groups is a pressing problem, only intensified by the suspicion and distrust which arise when a nation, thoroughly frightened, arms for defense. Some have seen this: Louis Adamic, for example, has let these people tell their stories in their own words, and has created a body of testimony more poignant in its truth and sincerity than most fiction.

D'Agostino's people are not the industrial workers of Pietro Di Donato's "Christ in Concrete," but the simple Italian peasants who, transplanted to this country, have forgotten the richness of their old-world heritage, and struggle only to attain what to them is American: money and success. In their sordid "Wop-roosts," shut off from that America, shunned and ignored, they live, restless, dissatisfied, learning nothing from the country and giving nothing of positive value to it. Into their midst comes the giant Marco, less a living character than a symbol of that ideal blending of old world and new which gives balance and happiness to the foreign-born. He is wise with the wisdom of earth and sun and growing things, and he brings them a message. "The olive that jumps to the apple tree. The olive that shouts it is an apple. There is the mistake. . . .

Mr. Bliven says:

"The new soilless agriculture, in which plants are grown in water or in fine sand to which the proper chemicals have been added, is already capable of being applied on a broad scale by any government which sincerely feels that its neighbors are not giving it sufficient breathing space. Only 12 percent of the world's land area is at present under cultivation (much of the remainder of course being mountains, deserts, Arctic wastes or otherwise unusable). If this land were all tilled with the methods now in use in the most advanced countries, the whole world could be fed—at a better standard than is now possible in many regions—on only one-half of the present area. Put it another way: the present world population of two billion people could safely be doubled without adding a single acre to the amount of land already under cultivation." New Republic: November 18, 1940; page 682.

The first and most authoritative book on this immensely important and fascinatingly interesting subject, is

Soilless Growth of Plants

by Carleton Ellis and Miller W. Swaney

This book brings within the reach of everyone a complete picture of the principles and practices of soilless growth. It was written after the authors had carried out extensive experiments on the growing of plants using nutrient solutions and without the aid of soil. These authors have removed from soilless growth the shroud of mystery which has hitherto hidden it from the view of the non-technical person. The "Soilless Growth of Plants" contains complete directions for carrying on plant culture, both in small- and large-scale operation.

160 Pages 60 illustrations; 3 in color $2.75

From any bookseller or direct from publisher

REINHOLD PUBLISHING CORPORATION
330 West 42nd Street New York, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The work of the immigrant is not to be American. The worry is to work, to produce what you can produce, and that is what makes you an American." He is a character rather like Barbet in Charles Morgan's new novel, "The Voyage." Under his guidance, all the lost Italians come gradually to understand their problem, and to begin the task of finding their rightful place in the new country.

All, that is, except Dr. Emilio, a shallow, calculating and yet somehow pitiful character. For, urged on by his ruthless, adoring mother, frantic with desire to emulate the Americans of wealth, blind with shame and hatred for his own people, he sees his medical career ruined through an indiscretion, and himself forced into marriage with a girl from among the class of Italians he despises.

Yet, of all the characters, he is the most credible. The others are types, very little differentiated, playing their parts, but not seen by the reader as distinct and individual. It is not so much precise characterization or subtle analysis of motives which concerns the author, but rather the broad problem of the adjustment of one cultural group to another, and if the novel is somewhat narrow in scope by virtue of this, a certain intensity is gained by focusing sharply on one phase of life. The novel itself is simply written, with none of that poetic lyricism which many have found annoying in Di Donato's work. One gets, too, that fine feeling for earth and weather, food and drink, and the atmosphere of a family at dinner, that many of these Italian authors such as Pagano, Fante and Di Donato have in common.

MURIEL BURNS

With this issue, Edmund Wilson retires from the literary department of The New Republic, which he has been conducting for the last three months. A special literary supplement edited by him and containing a selection of poetry and prose will be published some time in February.

Contributors

MELLVILLE M. FAGEN is a political scientist who is now engaged in writing a book on governmental control over exports of war materials.

BENJAMIN POST is an economist who is making a study of national-defense procurement policy.

JOHN PEALE BISHOP's collected poems will be published by Scribner's next spring.

DOROTHY DUNBAR BROMLEY has been a columnist for The New York Post and The New York World-Telegram.

MILL LAMPELL is from West Virginia. At present he is working in New York as a free-lance journalist.

JONATHAN MITCHELL, who lives in Washington, is well known for his articles on the political scene.

GEORGE ABBE is an English instructor at Mt. Holyoke College. He is the author of two novels, "Voices in the Square" and "Dreamer's Clay," and a collection of poetry, "Wait for These Things."

SAMUEL GRAFTON is an editorial writer on The New York Post and the author of the recently published "All Out."

ALLEN TATE has published several books of poetry and criticism, including "Selected Poems" (1937) and "Reactionary Essays." He is Resident Fellow in Poetry at Princeton.

STANLEY WALKER has been an editorial writer for The New York Herald Tribune and has worked on many other newspapers.

ROBERT FITZGERALD is the author of a volume, "Poems."

FREDA UTLEY is an English author and journalist who lived six years in the Soviet Union and is now in the United States. Her book on Russia, "The Dream We Lost," was recently published by John Day.

JERRE MANGIONE is an American of Italian descent who has worked in a publishing house and contributed to various magazines.

MURIEL BURNS, a recent graduate of Smith College, is a member of the editorial staff of The New Republic.

ACCENT *A Quarterly of New Literature*

ANNOUNCES ITS WINTER ISSUE (Vol. I, No. 2):

STORIES: Josephine Herbst's "Embalmer's Holiday"; Walter Van Tilburg Clark, James Farrell, Eli Cantor.

POEMS: Horace Gregory's "Broadway McPhail"; John Berryman, Ruth Lechlitner, John Brinnin, Patrick Byrne.

ARTICLES: Paul Rosenfeld on Daumier; Edgar Johnson on Shaw; Robert Fitzgerald on Pound; Desmond Powell on Wolfe; David Daiches on Mann; etc.

Other First Year Contributors: Aldington, Arvin, Ferguson, Filler, M. Levin, March, Katherine Anne Porter, Ransom, D. Schwartz, Stuart, W. Stevens, Weidman, R. Wright.

Send $1 for a year or 30c for a sample copy

Box 102, Univ. Sta. Urbana, Illinois

Help Defend the Bill of Rights in Oklahoma

Benefit Performance, Sunday Night, JAN. 12

MARC BLITZSTEIN'S No for an Answer

ALAN SHAW Oklahoma prisoner out on bail will speak

Tickets on sale at the

I. L. D., 112 E. 19 St. & the Workers Bookstore, 50 E. 13 St.

Prices: $3.30, $2.75, $2.20, $1.65, $1.10, 85c.

Get the most expensive you can afford—every dollar helps

INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE
112 East 19th Street, New York City

Please send me ..... tickets at $..... each for the January 12 performance of "No for an Answer." My remittance for $..... is enclosed.

Name.....

Address.....

The Colonials

1125 Fourth St. South, St. Petersburg, Florida. Apartments with housekeeping facilities. Delightfully furnished, constant hot water. Several single rooms with bath. Reasonable rates. Day, month, season. Close to all Amusements, Beaches, Post Office and Business Section.

WEARING APPAREL

"VALUES NOT LABELS" at Miss Goodman's, who is having a special reduction on all her exclusive model dresses, coats and stunning dinner and evening gowns. 474 7th Avenue (36th St.). LA 4-4013.

HACKETT SANITARIUM

204 Fair St., Kingston, N. Y.

Telephone 4084

Any Type, Medical or Nervous.

Minimum price $15 per week

Hydrotherapy and Massage Department

Classified Rate: 6 point type (6 words to the line) 50c a type line; 5 point (7 words to the line) 45c a type line.

LITERARY HELP

TREATISES, RESEARCH PAPERS, SPEECHES. Special Articles, reviews, promptly prepared to requirements of busy professionals. Our extensive experience available at moderate rates, with assurance of scholarly serviceable results. AUTHORS RESEARCH BUREAU, 516 Fifth Ave., New York.

PERSONAL

Newcomer to Indianapolis would like to meet an individual or two interested in things intellectual. Address: Box 259, The New Republic.

WHAT will 1941 mean to YOU? Let me help you gain self-knowledge and power by my own method of psychoanalysis. Your full name at birth required; also day, month and year of birth. $2.00. Satisfaction guaranteed. Address: "Merlin," Box 260, The New Republic.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED